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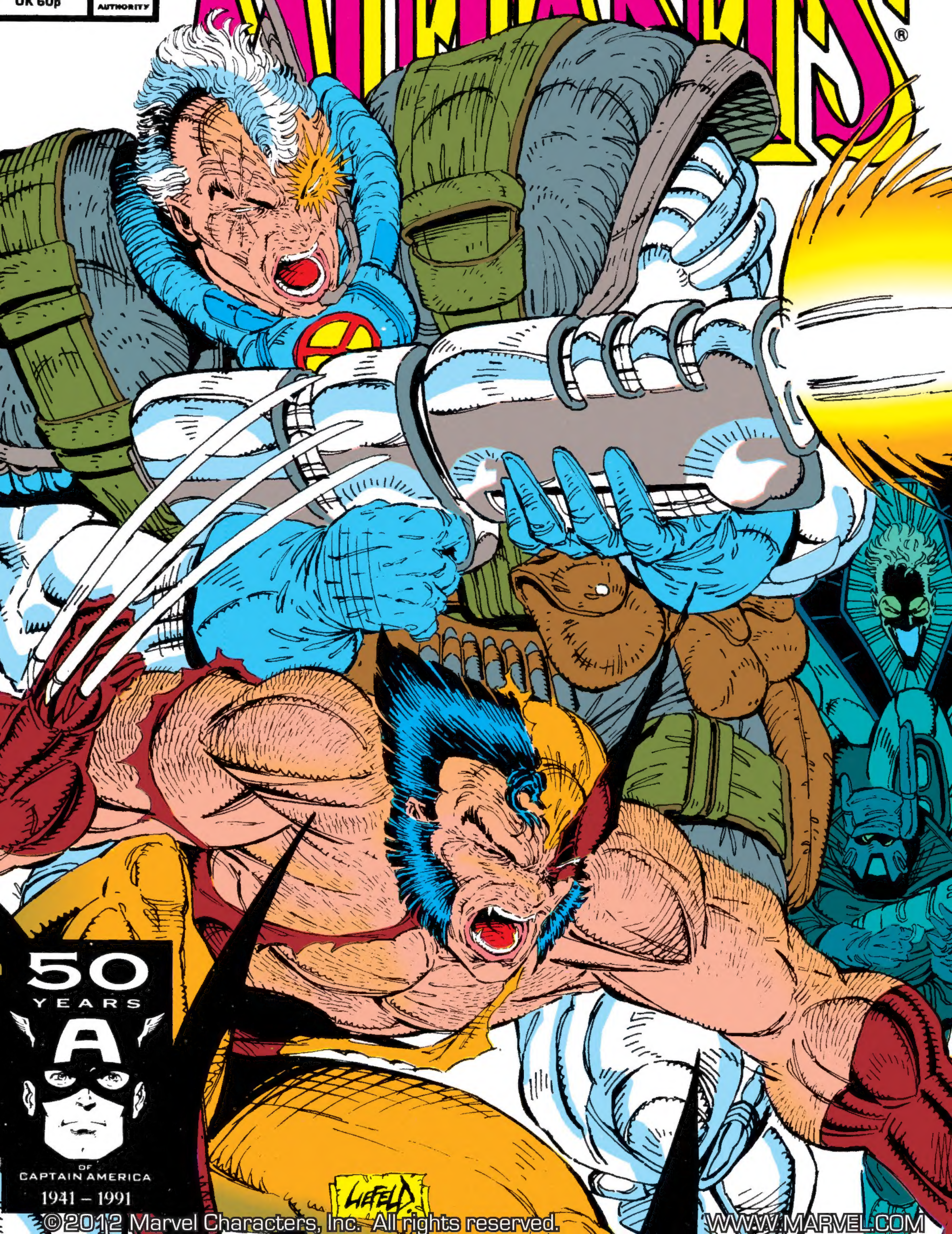
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AUTHORITY

X-TINCTION AGENDA PART 8

THE NEW

MUTANT



50
YEARS

A

OF
CAPTAIN AMERICA

1941 - 1991

LIFEL

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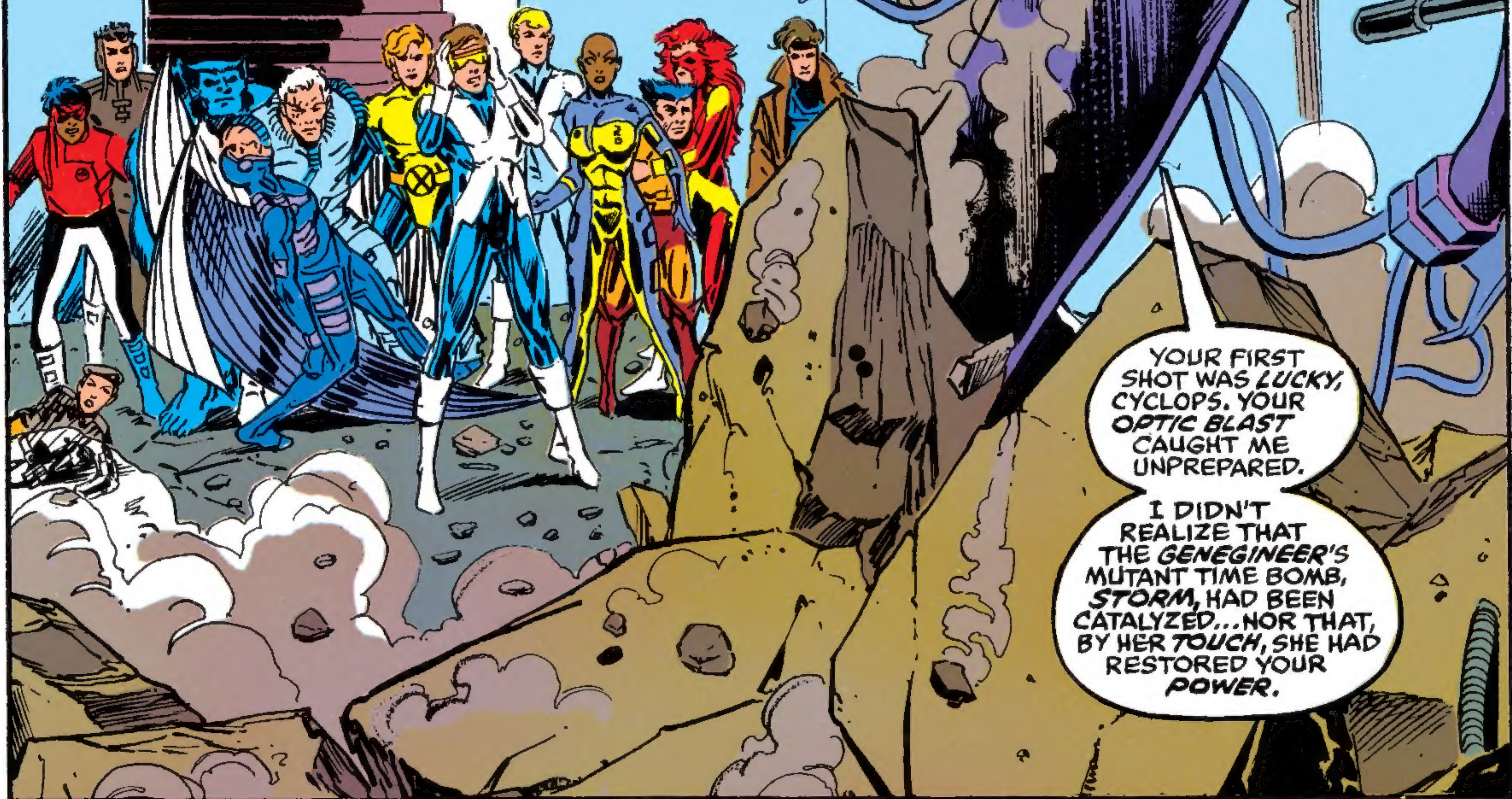
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THE STAGE-- GENOSHA, AN ISLAND NATION, LYING JUST EAST OF AFRICA. ONCE LITTLE MORE THAN A BARREN ROCK, ITS PRESENT PROSPERITY HAS BEEN CREATED BY THE GENETICALLY ENGINEERED, SUPER-POWERED SLAVES CALLED MUTATES.

THE VILLAIN-- CAMERON HODGE, ALSO KNOWN AS THE COMMANDER, A TWISTED CYBORG WHO HAS USED AN ALLIANCE WITH GENOSHA TO PURSUE A TERRIBLE REVENGE.

THE HEROES-- HODGE'S ARCH ENEMIES, MUTANTS, SPORTS OF NATURE, BORN WITH AN X-FACTOR IN THEIR GENETIC STRUCTURE THAT GIVES THEM MORE-THAN-HUMAN POWERS.

USUALLY THESE MUTANTS FORM SEPARATE TEAMS... THE FUGITIVE X-MEN, THE PUBLIC HEROES X-FACTOR, AND THE YOUNG NEW MUTANTS... BUT NOW THEY HAVE Banded TOGETHER AGAINST A MOST UNCOMMON AND DEADLY ENEMY.



YOUR FIRST SHOT WAS LUCKY, CYCLOPS. YOUR OPTIC BLAST CAUGHT ME UNPREPARED.

I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT THE GENEGINEER'S MUTANT TIME BOMB, STORM, HAD BEEN CATALYZED... NOR THAT, BY HER TOUCH, SHE HAD RESTORED YOUR POWER.

LOUISE SIMONSON
WRITER

GUANG YAP
PENCILLER

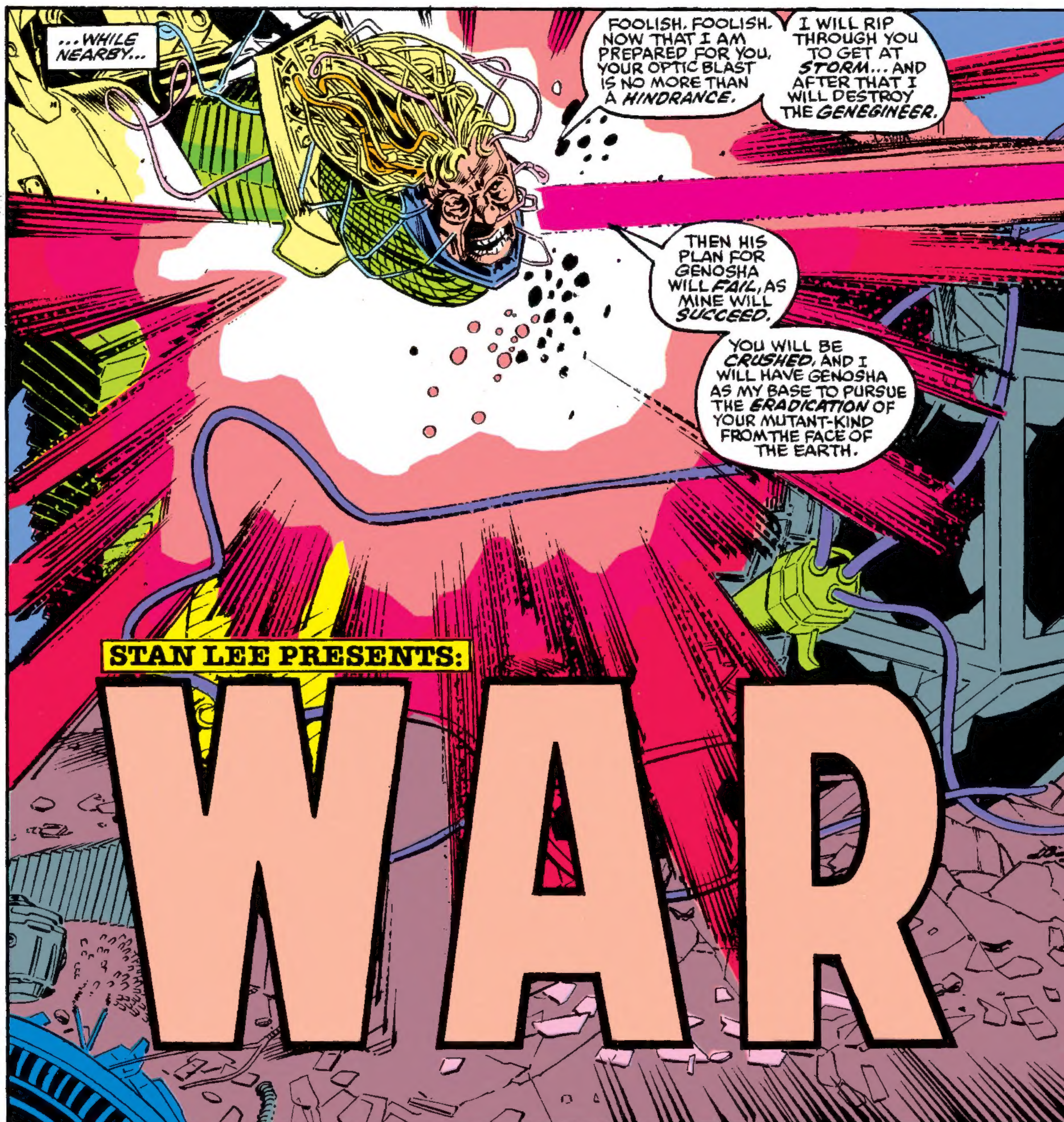
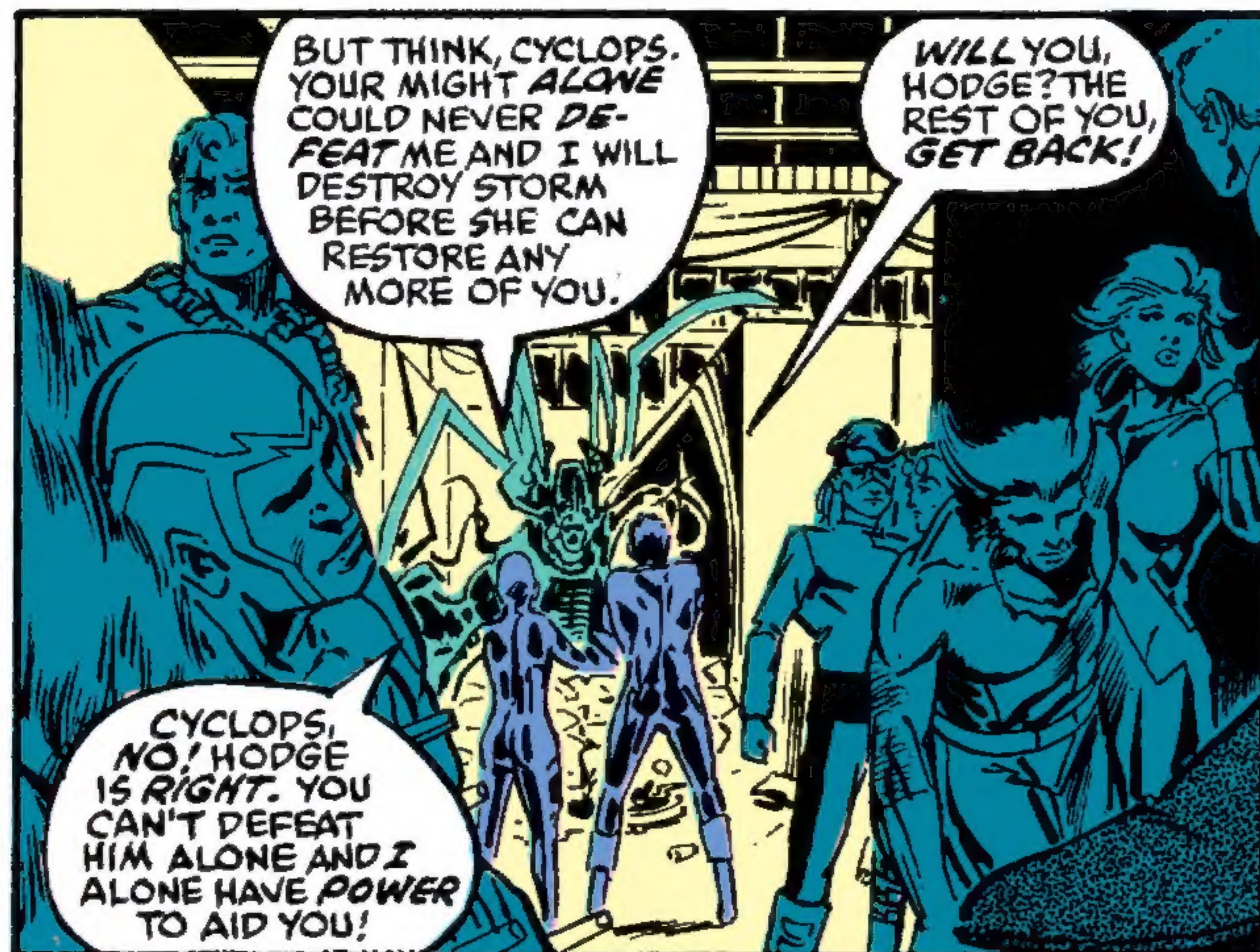
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INKER

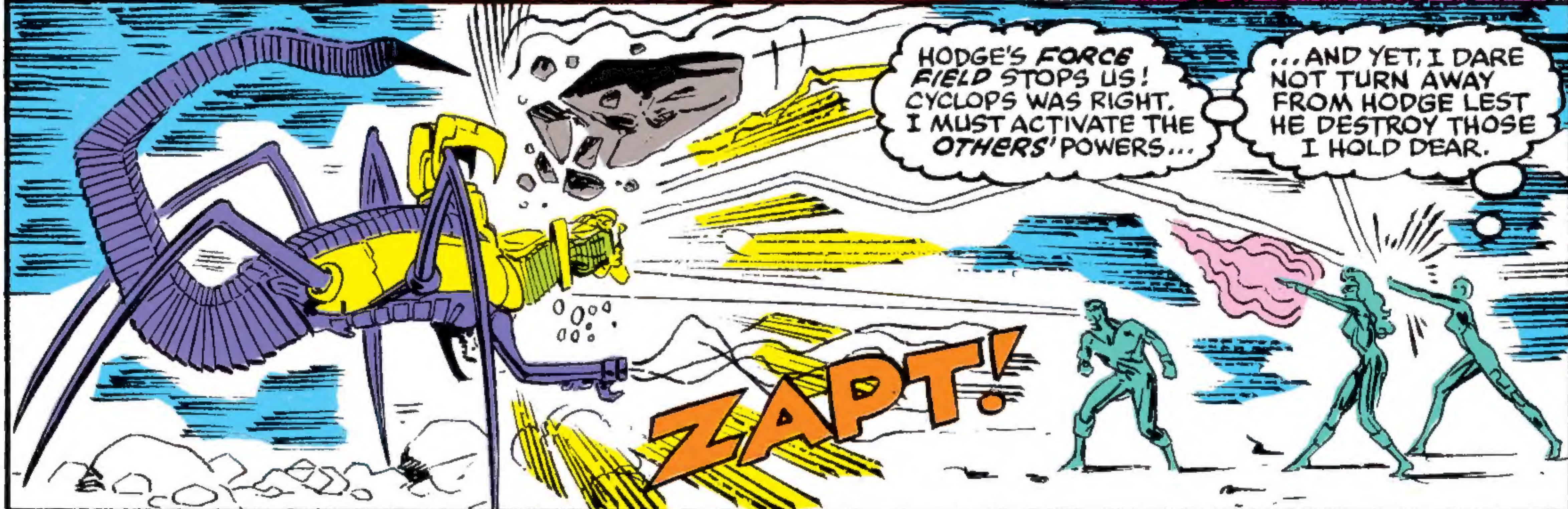
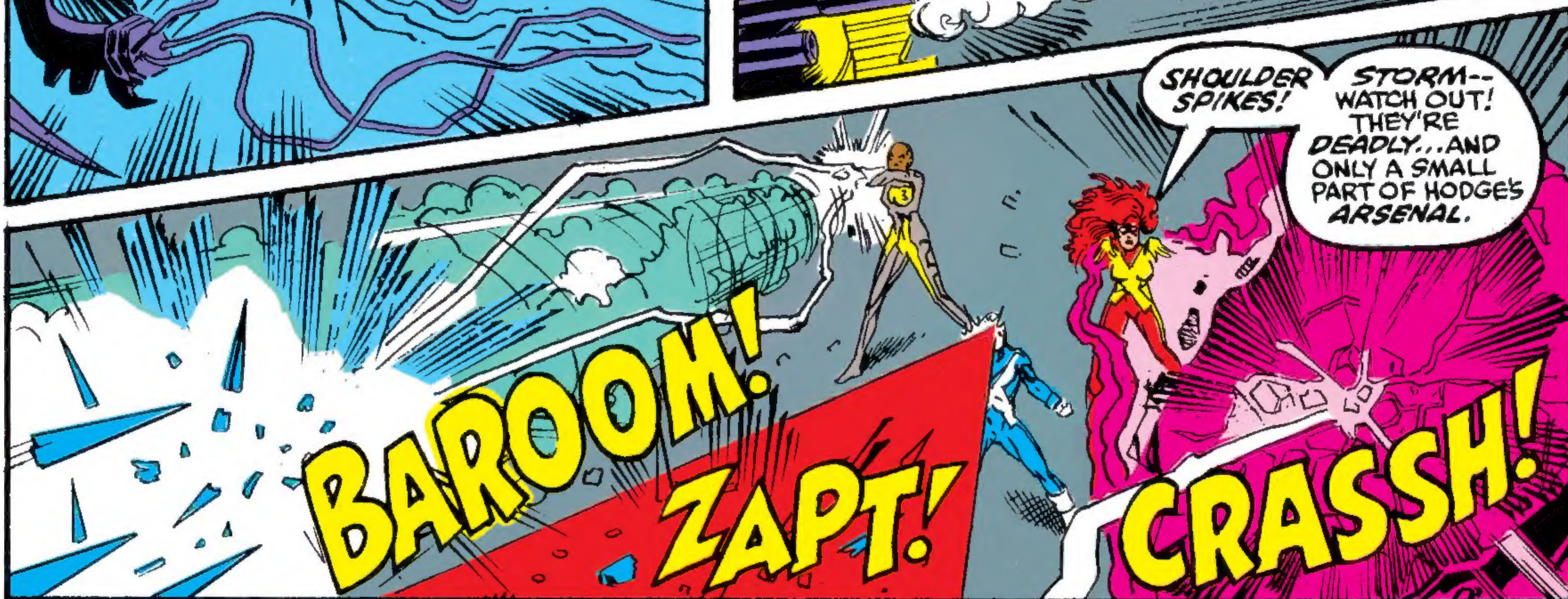
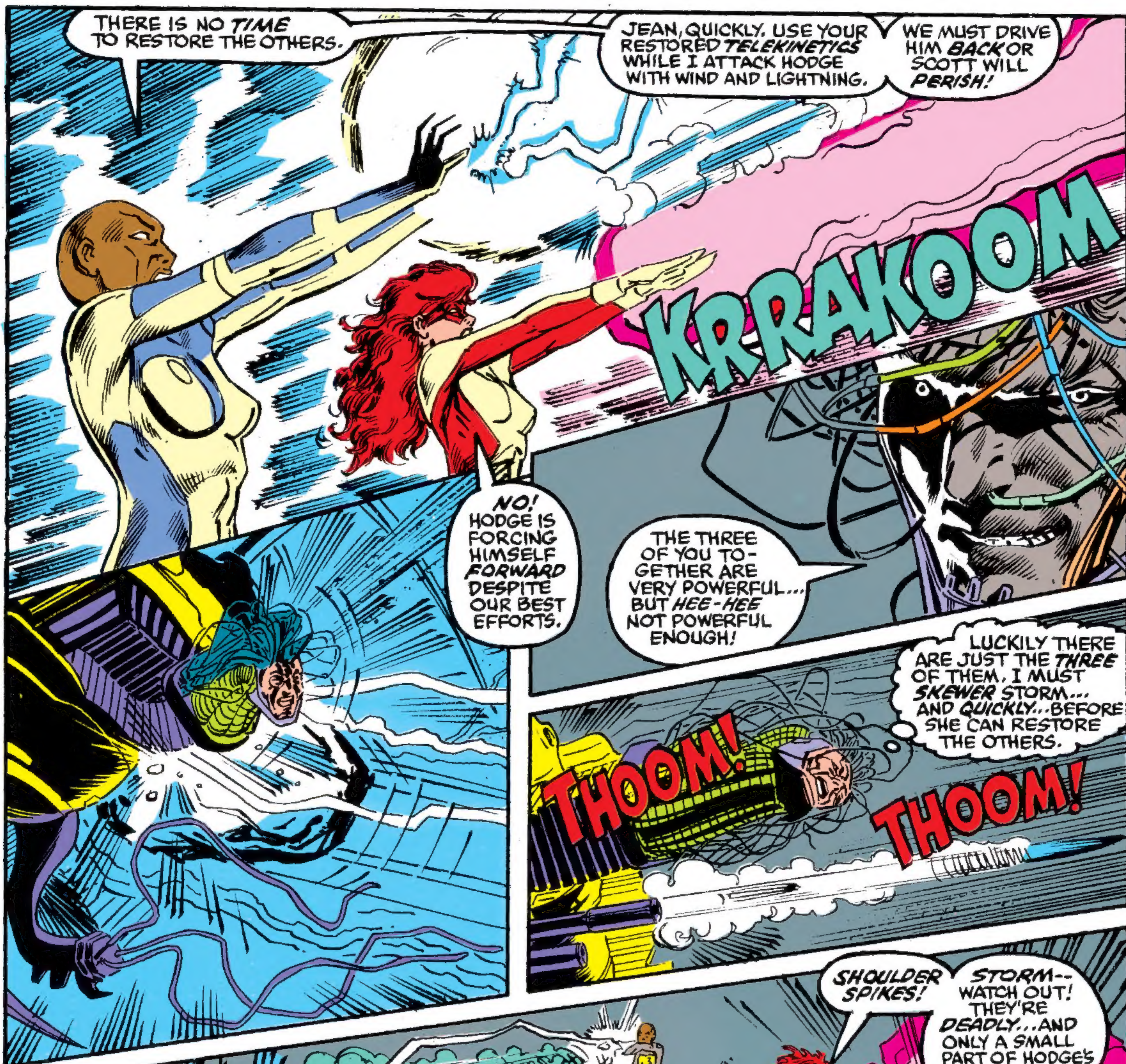
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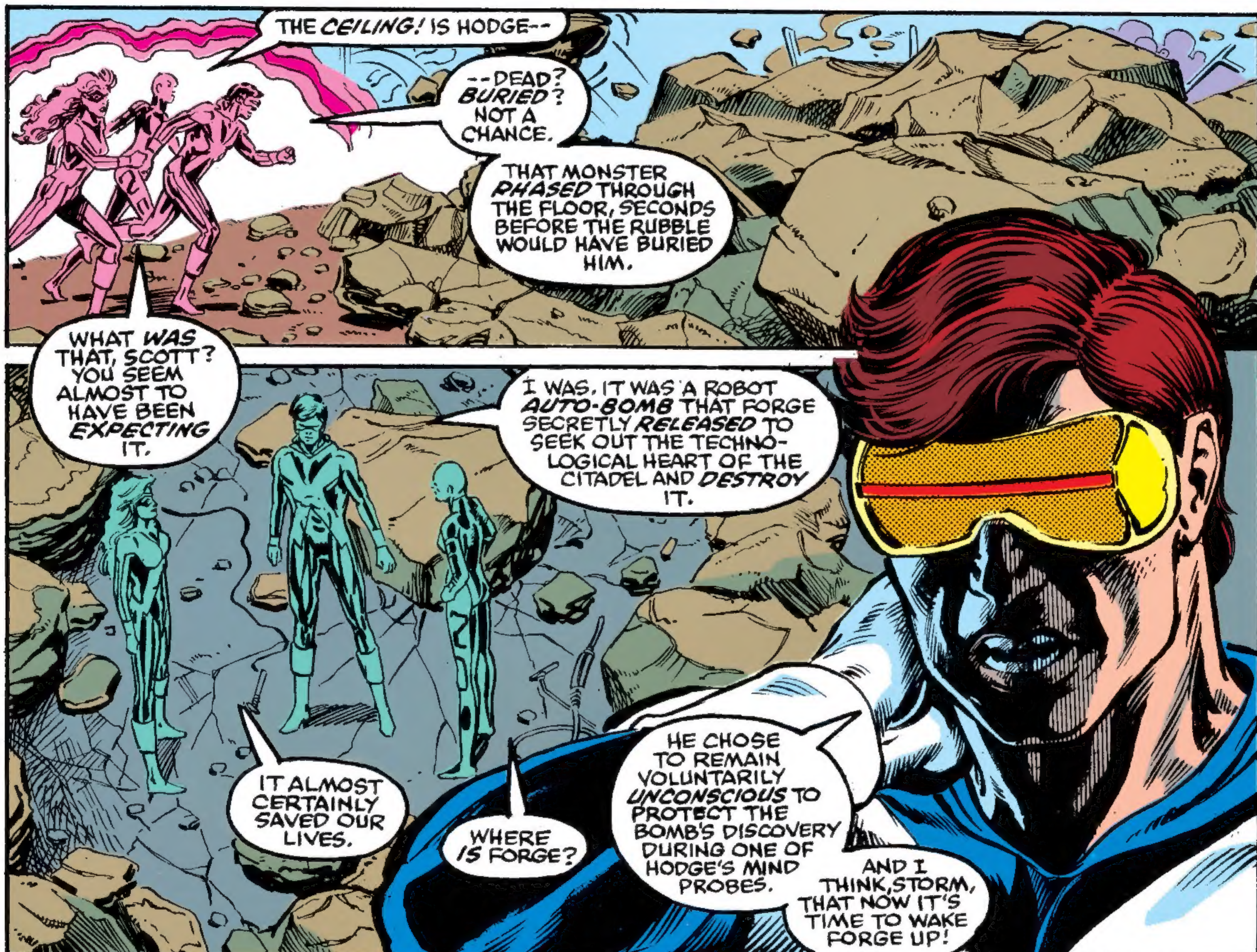
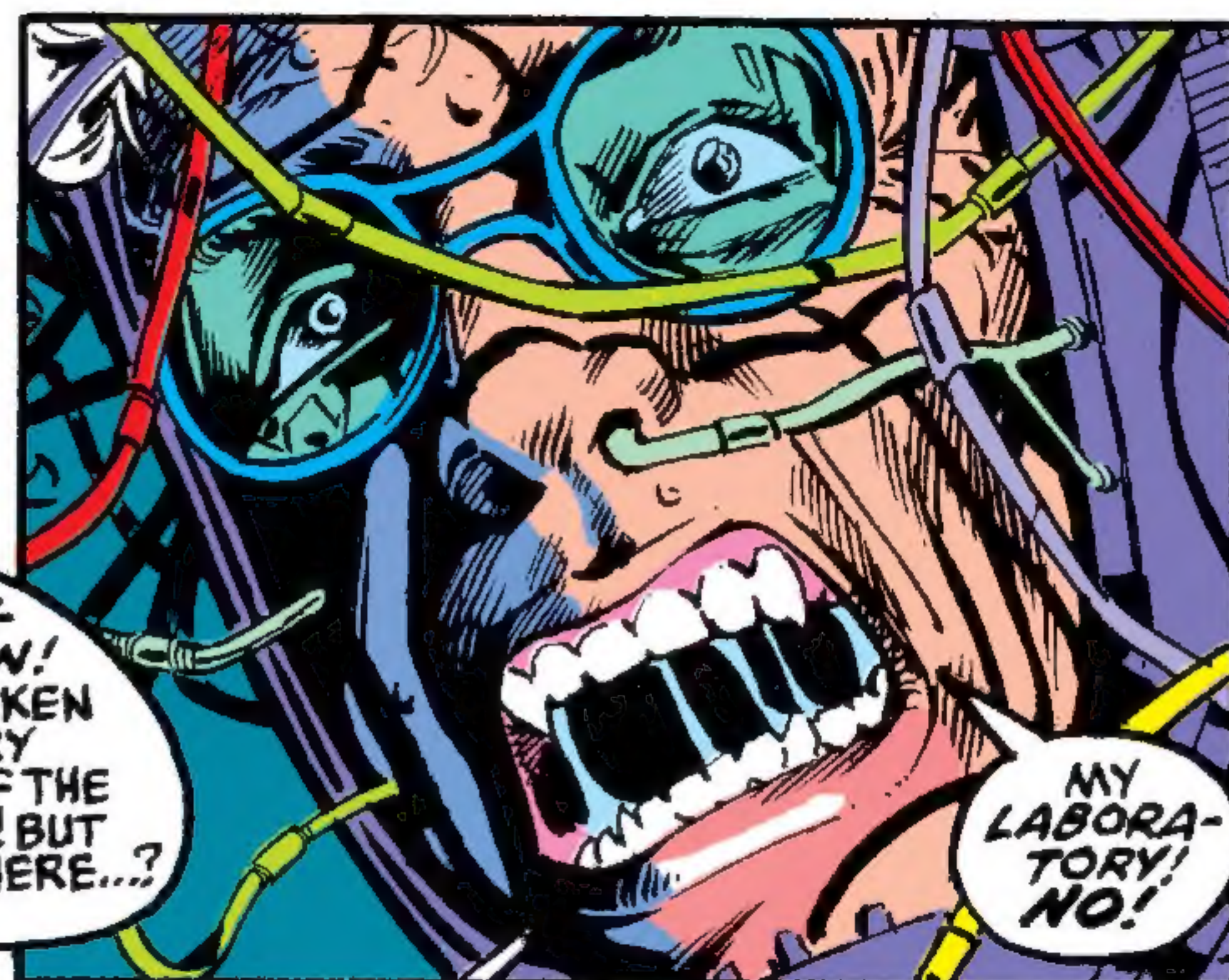
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MINUTES EARLIER, THE MUTANTS BOOM-BOOM, JUBILEE, AND RICTOR FOLLOW THE GENEGINEER AND HIS MUTATE GARDENER...

A LITTLE FARTHER, NUMBER 360, AND WE WILL HAVE REACHED OUR GOAL.

AND YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT HOW WE'D SNEAK BACK INTO THE CITADEL, JUBE!

YEAH, BOOM-BOOM, PIECE O' CAKE. ONCE THE MUTATE'S TUNNEL REACHES THE CITADEL...

THEN I'M GONNA SHAKE THIS ISLAND APART, PIECE BY PIECE, 'TIL RAHNE... AND THE OTHERS... ARE RELEASED... AND RESTORED.

...ALL WE HAFTA DO IS GO INSIDE, FIND WIPEOUT, AND MAKE HIM RESTORE YOUR POWERS.

WHAT I DON'T GET IS WHY THE GENEGINEER IS DOING THIS? I THOUGHT HE PRETTY MUCH RAN THE CITADEL.

LIKE STATE THE OBVIOUS, JUBILEE, WHY DONCHA? I WONDER WHAT CAUSED IT, RIC?

MUTATE MUST HAVE BURNED THROUGH THE POWER WIRES. THE BLAST KILLED HIM.

GENEGINEER'S STILL ALIVE, THOUGH.

BA-BOOMM!!

WHO CARES WHY, AS LONG AS-- HE'S THROUGH!

SUDDENLY, THE DETONATION THAT SHAKES THEIR TEAMMATES ABOVE HURLS THESE YOUNGSTERS TO THEIR KNEES...

AN EXPLOSION!

WOULD YOU JUST LOOK AT THIS PLACE! WHERE THE HECK DO YOU SUPPOSE WE ARE?

I DUNNO, IT'S LINED WITH VIDEO SCREENS... A MEDIA JUNKIE'S PARADISE!

SHHHH. SOMEONE'S COMING.

DRAW THE GENEGINEER OUT OF SIGHT BEHIND THE COUNTER, AND LIKE HURRY UP, OKAY?

AND FROM THE DOORWAY THE COMMANDER SURVEYS THE ROOM, HIS FACE A MASK OF HORROR AND FURY...

IT'S HODGE!
WE'RE IN HIS LAIR!

OH SPIT!
PLEASE DON'T
LET HIM FIND US!
PLEASE... I'LL
DO ANYTHING,
ONLY... PLEEEEEEASE...

HE'S UGLY,
YEAH, AN' HE'S BIG
AND MORE POWERFUL
THAN ALL OF US PUT
TOGETHER, BUT WHAT
ELSE HAS HE GOT
GOIN' FOR HIM...?

WHAT'S
THIS?

THE REMNANTS OF A
TRACKER BOMB--
ONE OF FORGE'S
DESIGNS, I'LL
WAGER!

IT HAS
DESTROYED
MUCH... BUT
MY COMPUT-
ER'S MAIN
FRAME IS
STILL OPERA-
TIVE.

IT SUC-
CEEDED AT
ITS TASK...
AND YET IT
FAILED MOST
MISERABLY!

...AND
THAT WILL
GIVE ME ALL
THE INFORMA-
TION AND POWER
THAT I NEED
TO WIN THIS
LITTLE WAR!

I WILL FIND
THOSE RESPONS-
IBLE FOR THIS
DESTRUCTION
AND DESTROY
THEM. EVERY
MUTANT ON
THIS ISLAND.

AT LEAST
HE'S GONE
NOW.

HEY,
WHAT'S
THIS...?
IT'S GOT
WARLOCK'S
NAME ON IT...

IT IS
WARLOCK!

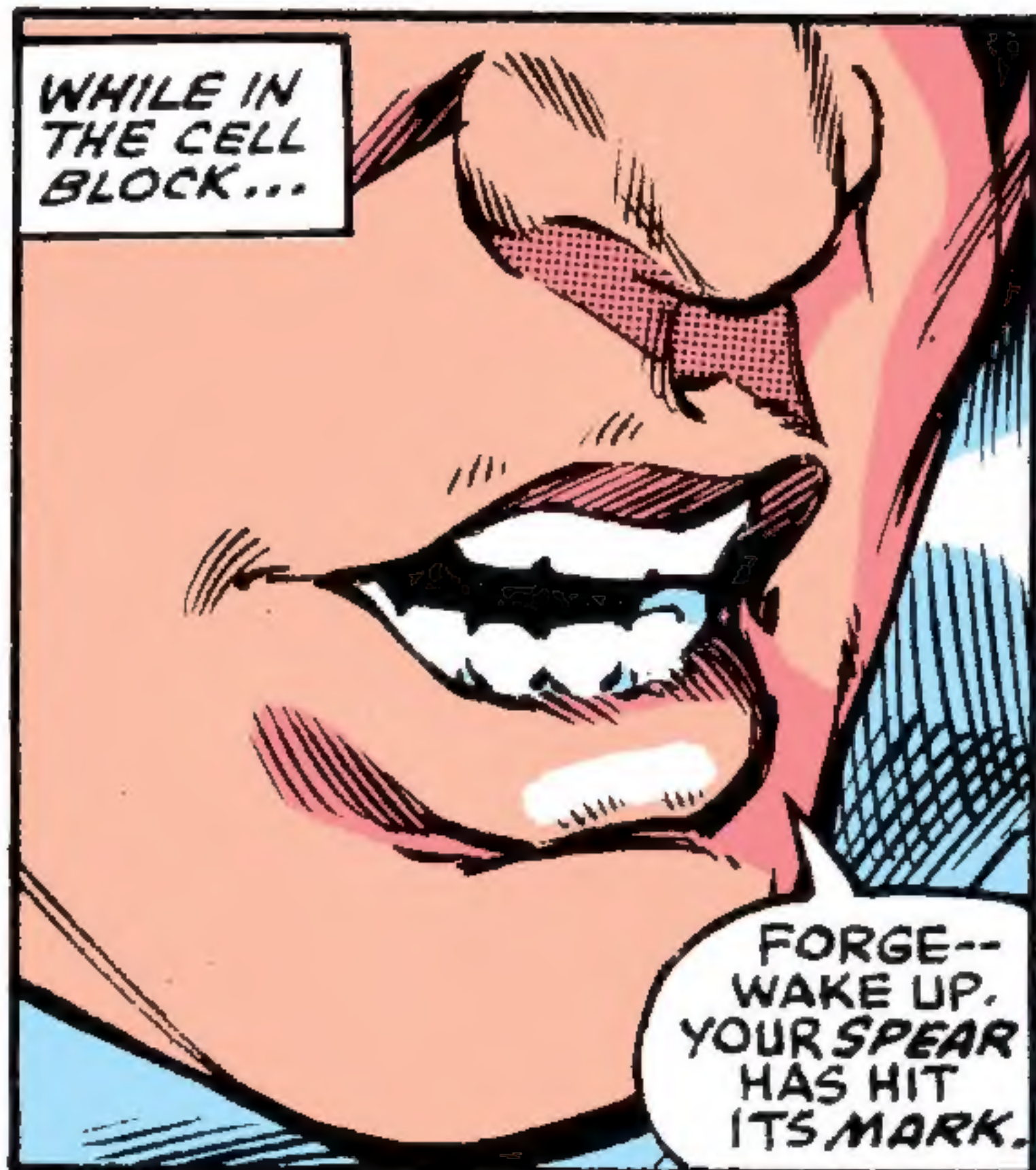
EVERY
SINGLE
MUTANT
IN THE
WORLD!

ALL
THAT'S
LEFT
OF HIM.

ALL RIGHT,
GENENGINEER!
I'VE HAD IT...
WITH YOU
AND HODGE
AND EVERY
GENOSHAN
ON THIS
ISLAND!

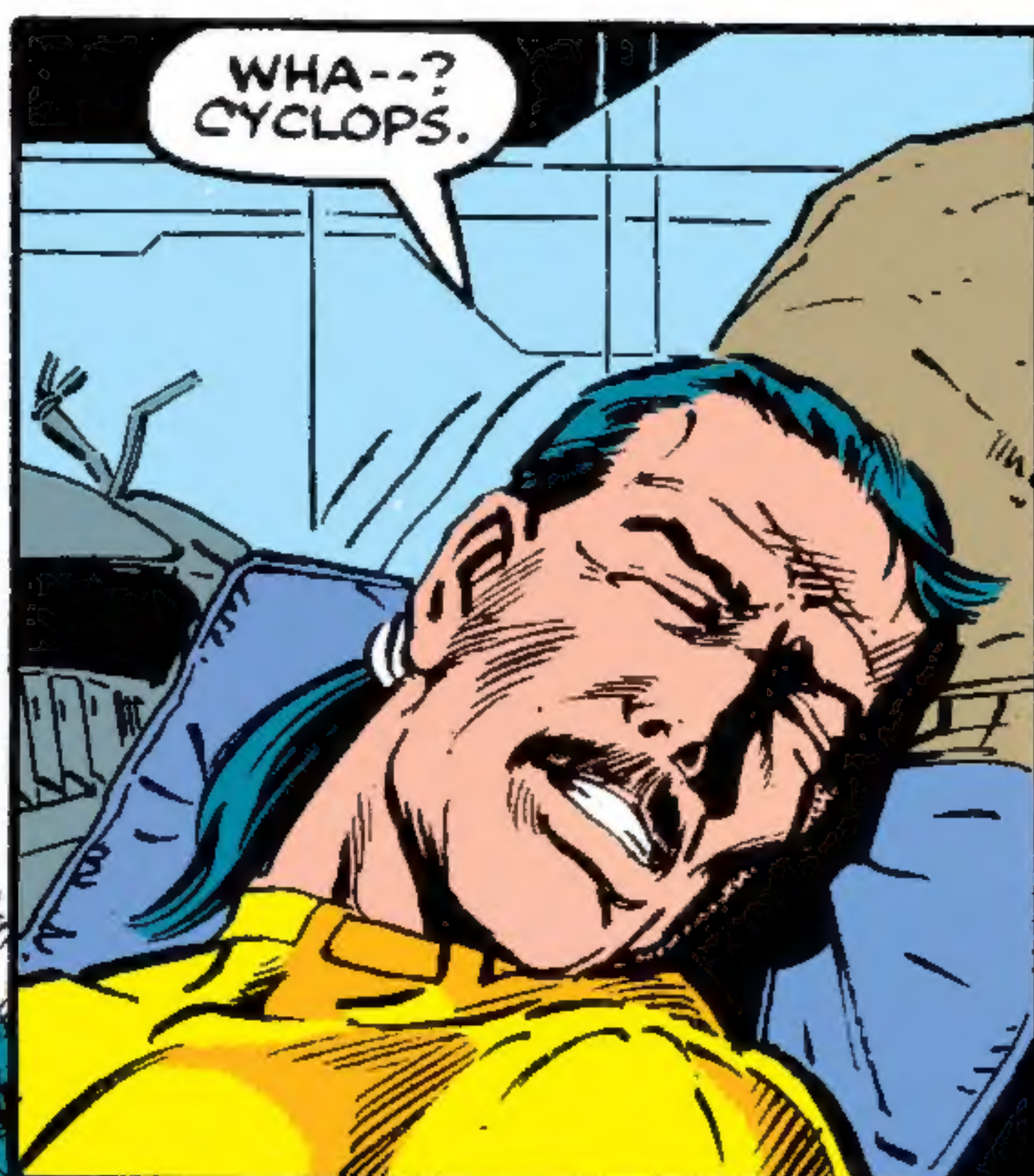
TAKE US TO
WIPEOUT.
HE'S GONNA
GIVE ME BACK
MY POWERS...

...AND I'M
GOING TO USE
IT TO FREE OUR
PEOPLE AND SHAKE
HODGE INTO SCRAP
METAL!



WHILE IN THE CELL BLOCK...

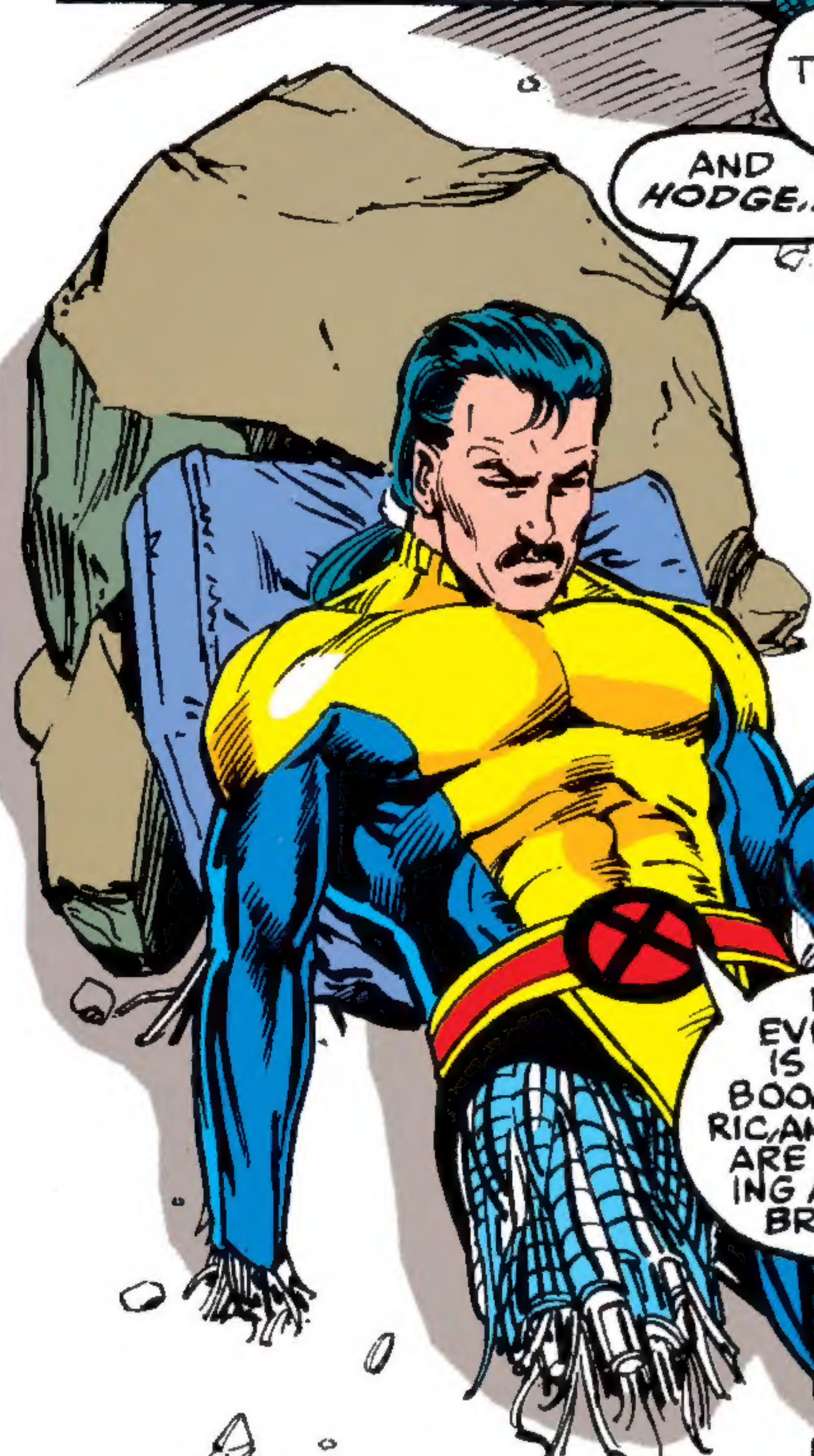
FORGE-- WAKE UP, YOUR SPEAR HAS HIT ITS MARK.



WHA--? CYCLOPS.



IT'S OVER THEN.



NOT QUITE, THOUGH WE'RE FREE FROM PRISON.

AND HODGE...?

STILL ALIVE AND... OPERATIVE. HE APPARENTLY PANICKED, YOUR BOMB MUST HAVE DESTROYED SOMETHING VITAL.

ON THAT FRONT, MY FRIEND, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS.

NOT EVERYONE IS HERE. BOOM-BOOM, RIC AND RAHNE ARE STILL MISSING AND YOUR BROTHER.

AND WOLVERINE'S YOUNG FRIEND, JUBILEE.

STORM... WHERE IS STORM? AND WHAT OF OUR POWERS?



STORM. ORORO. YOU'RE...



...RESTORED TO FULL ADULTHOOD AND POWER...

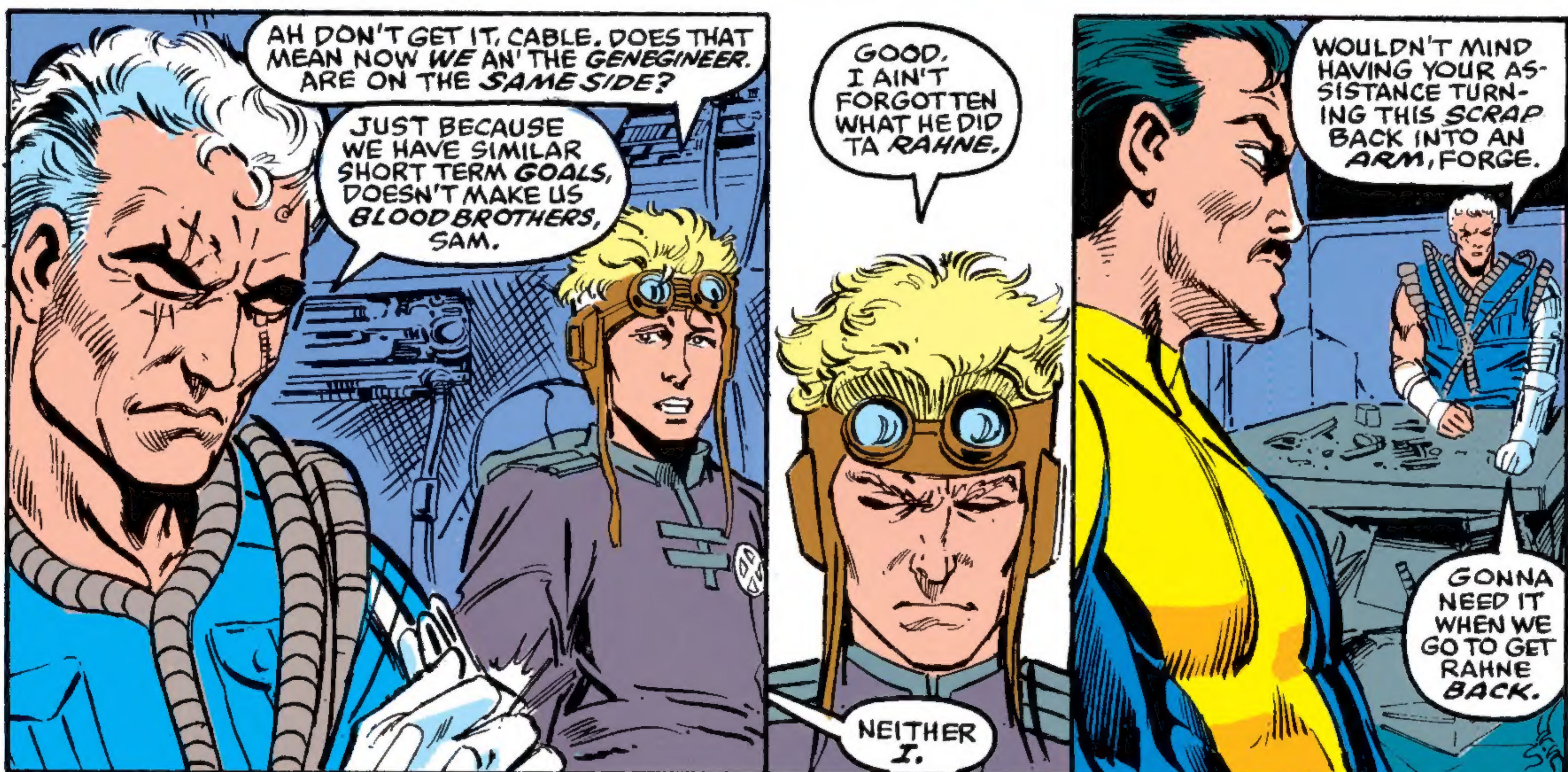
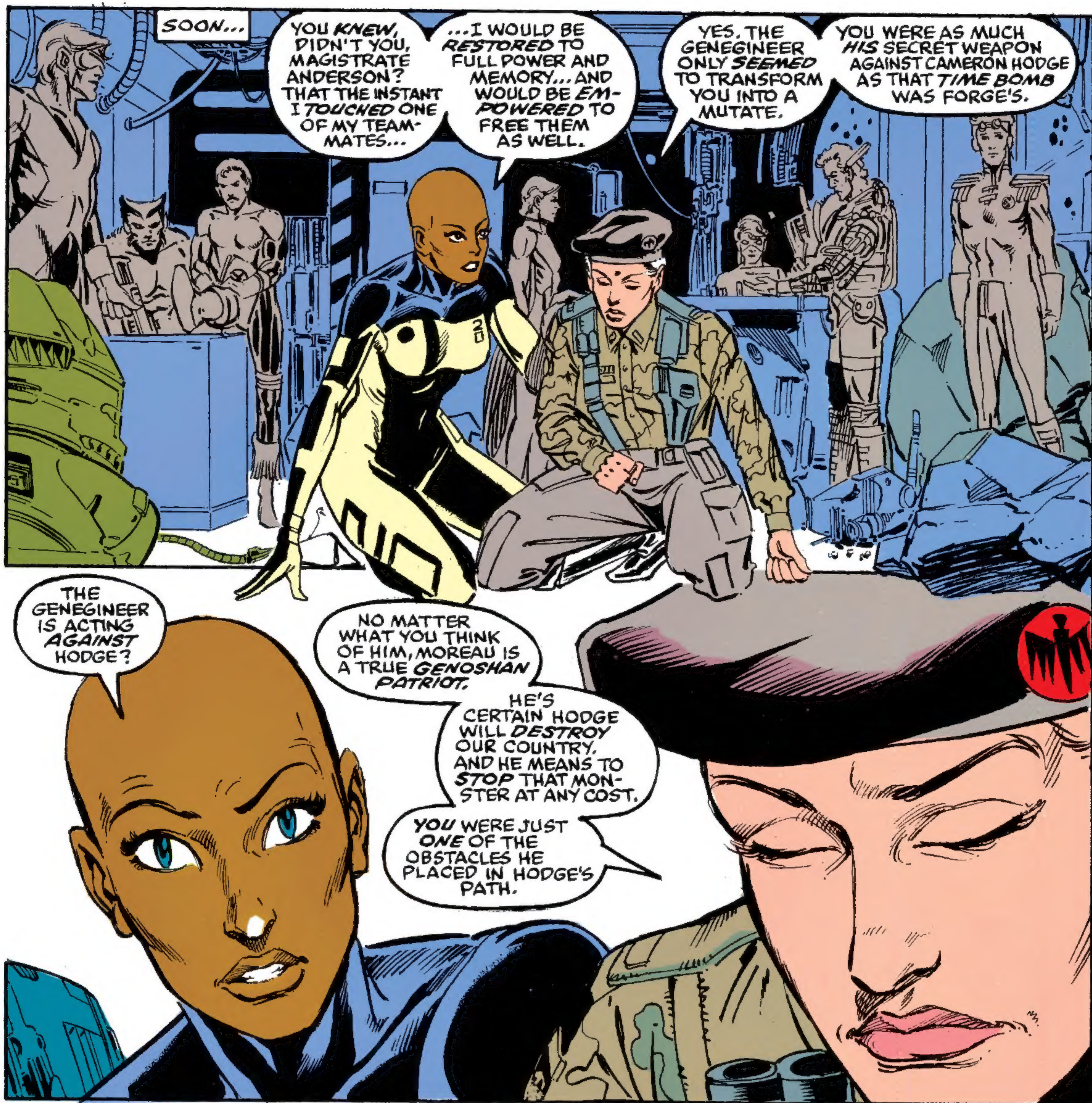


...AND MORE.



DESPITE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGES, NOT SO SURE I LIKE THIS CHANGE.

ONE SIDE, MON AMI. I THINK PERHAPS STORM'S NEXT KISS HAD BEST BE MINE.



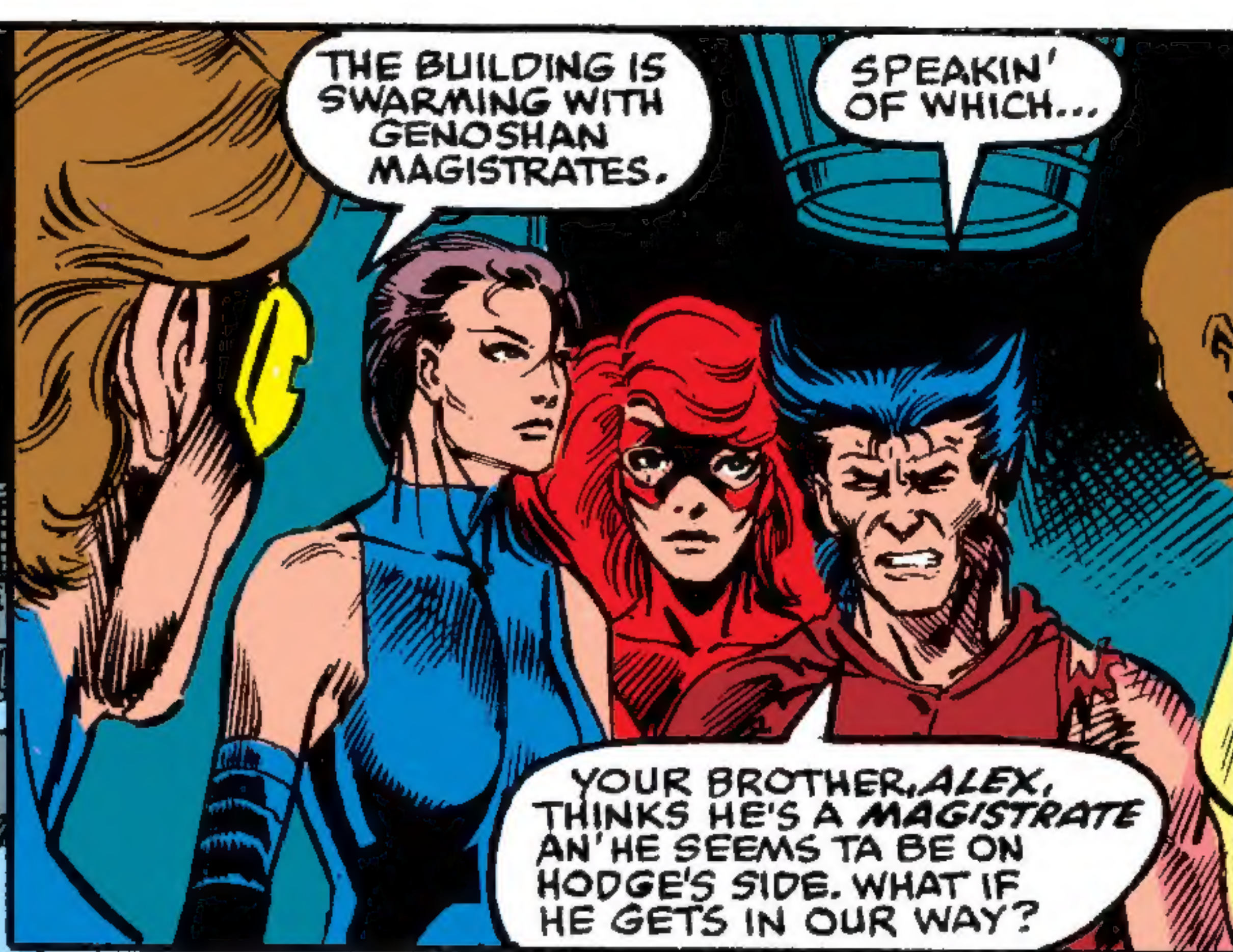


LATER...

CABLE--YOU, STORM, CANNONBALL, AND SUN-SPOT LOCATE AND RESCUE RAHNE, THEN JOIN THE REST OF US IN OUR PURSUIT OF HODGE.

WE'LL SPLIT UP, SEARCH FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE CITADEL UP...

MAINTAIN RADIO SILENCE AS LONG AS POSSIBLE, AND TAKE CARE. HODGE ISN'T OUR ONLY ENEMY.



THE BUILDING IS SWARMING WITH GENOSHAN MAGISTRATES.

SPEAKIN' OF WHICH...

YOUR BROTHER, ALEX, THINKS HE'S A MAGISTRATE AN' HE SEEMS TA BE ON HODGE'S SIDE. WHAT IF HE GETS IN OUR WAY?



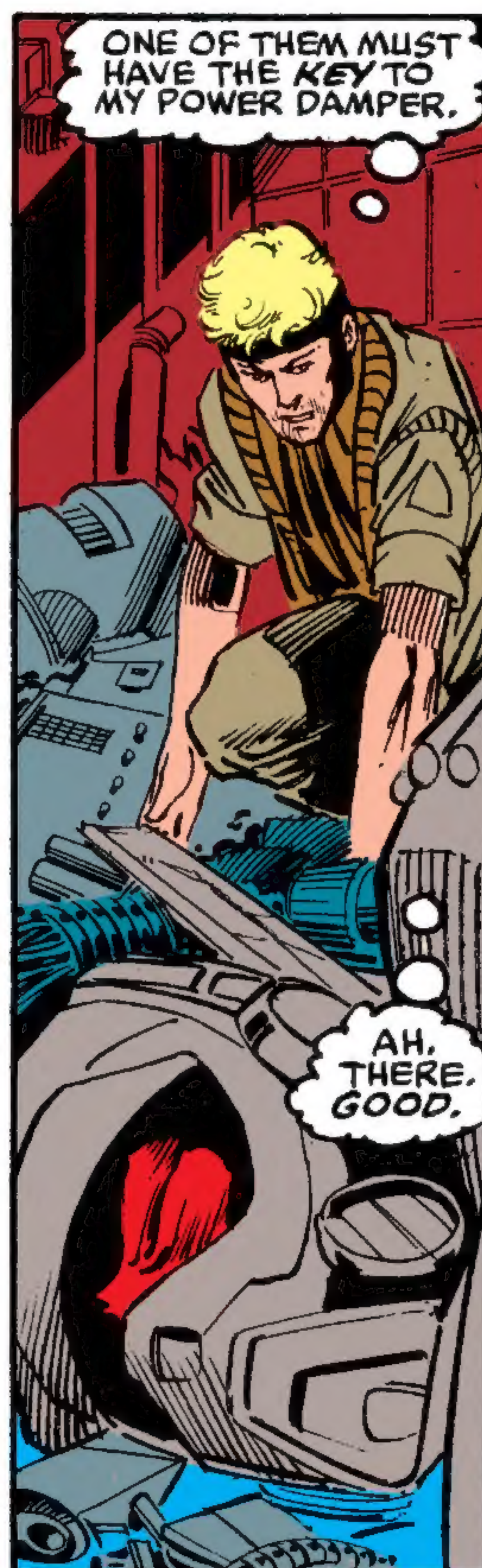
TRY TO REASON WITH HIM...OR INCAPACITATE HIM. OR GO THROUGH HIM. WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET TO HODGE.



OTHER PORTIONS OF THE CITADEL WERE ALSO DESTROYED BY THE BLAST.

AND ON A LOWER LEVEL, CYCLOPS'S BROTHER ALEX STUMBLES FROM THE RUBBLE OF A COLLAPSED CELL BLOCK...

EXPLOSION KILLED THE GUARDS, NEARLY KILLED ME.



ONE OF THEM MUST HAVE THE KEY TO MY POWER DAMPER.

AH, THERE, GOOD.



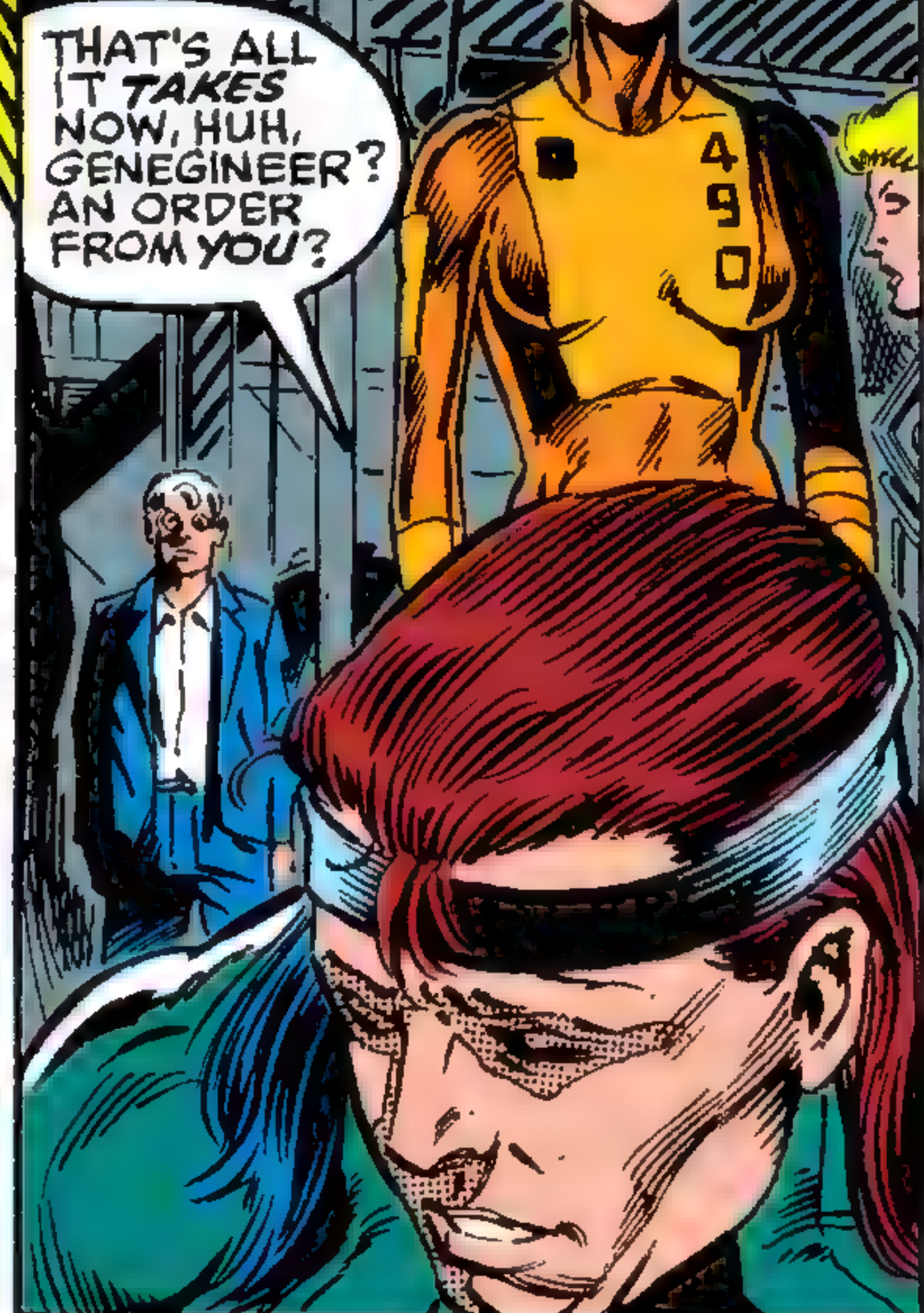
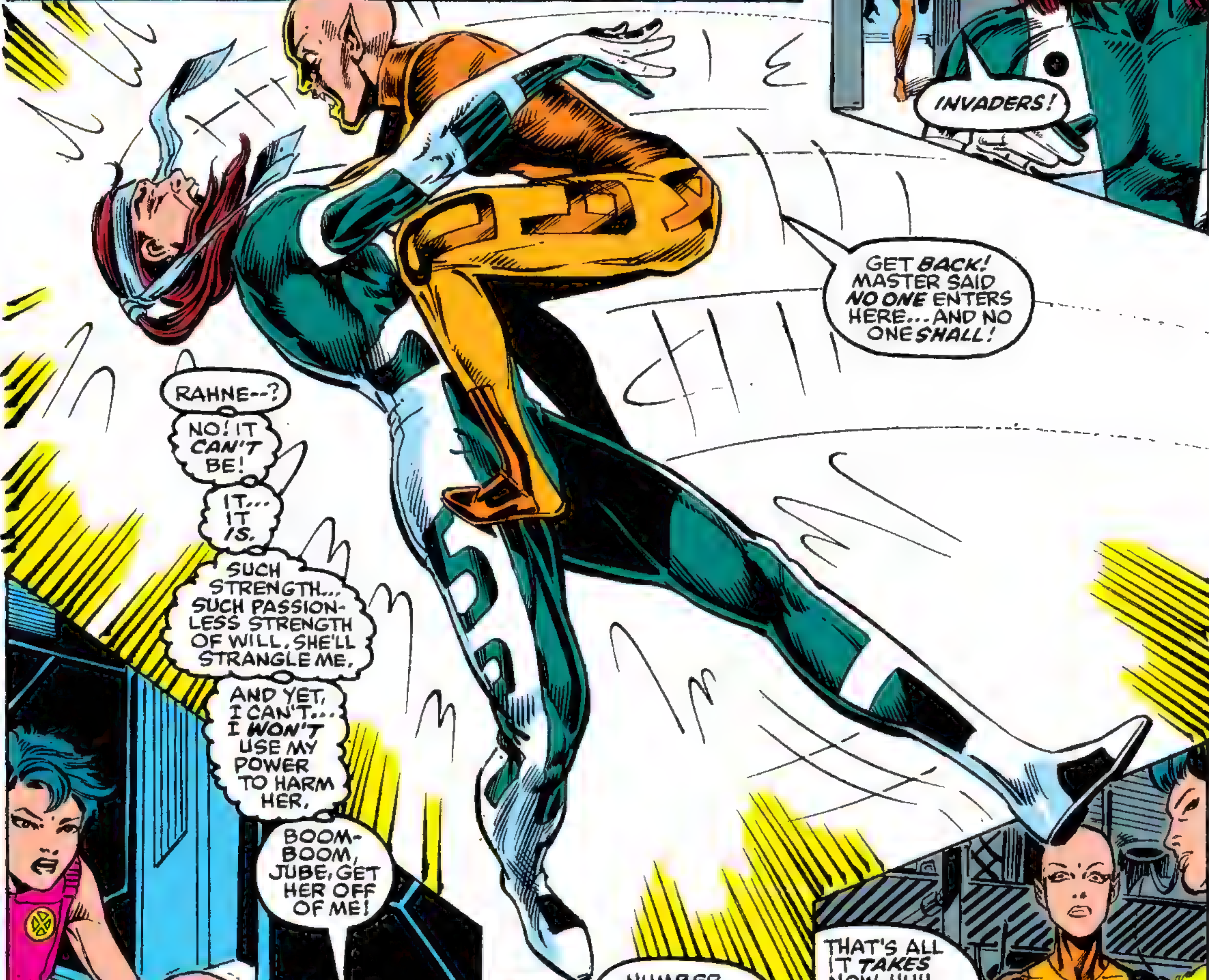
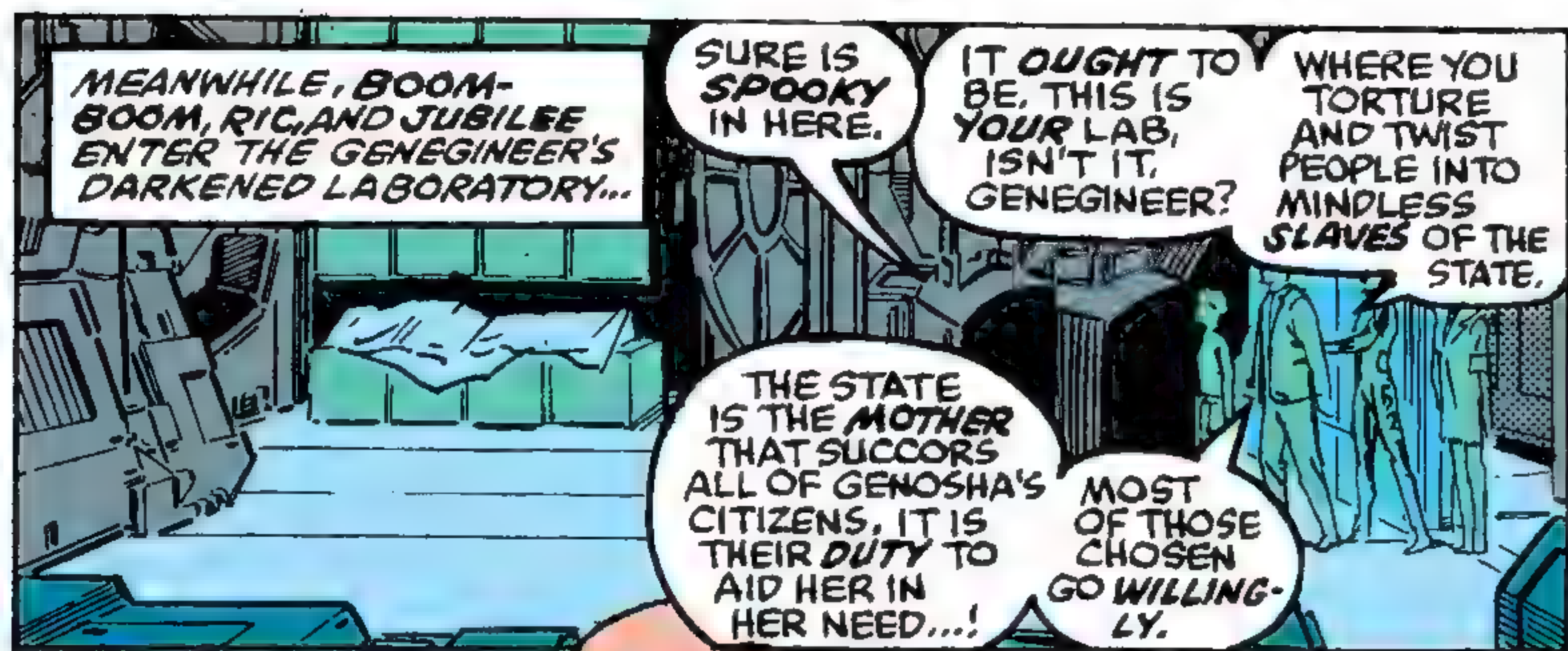
THAT I APPARENTLY BETRAYED MY BROTHER TO HODGE DIDN'T KEEP HODGE FROM FRAMING ME.

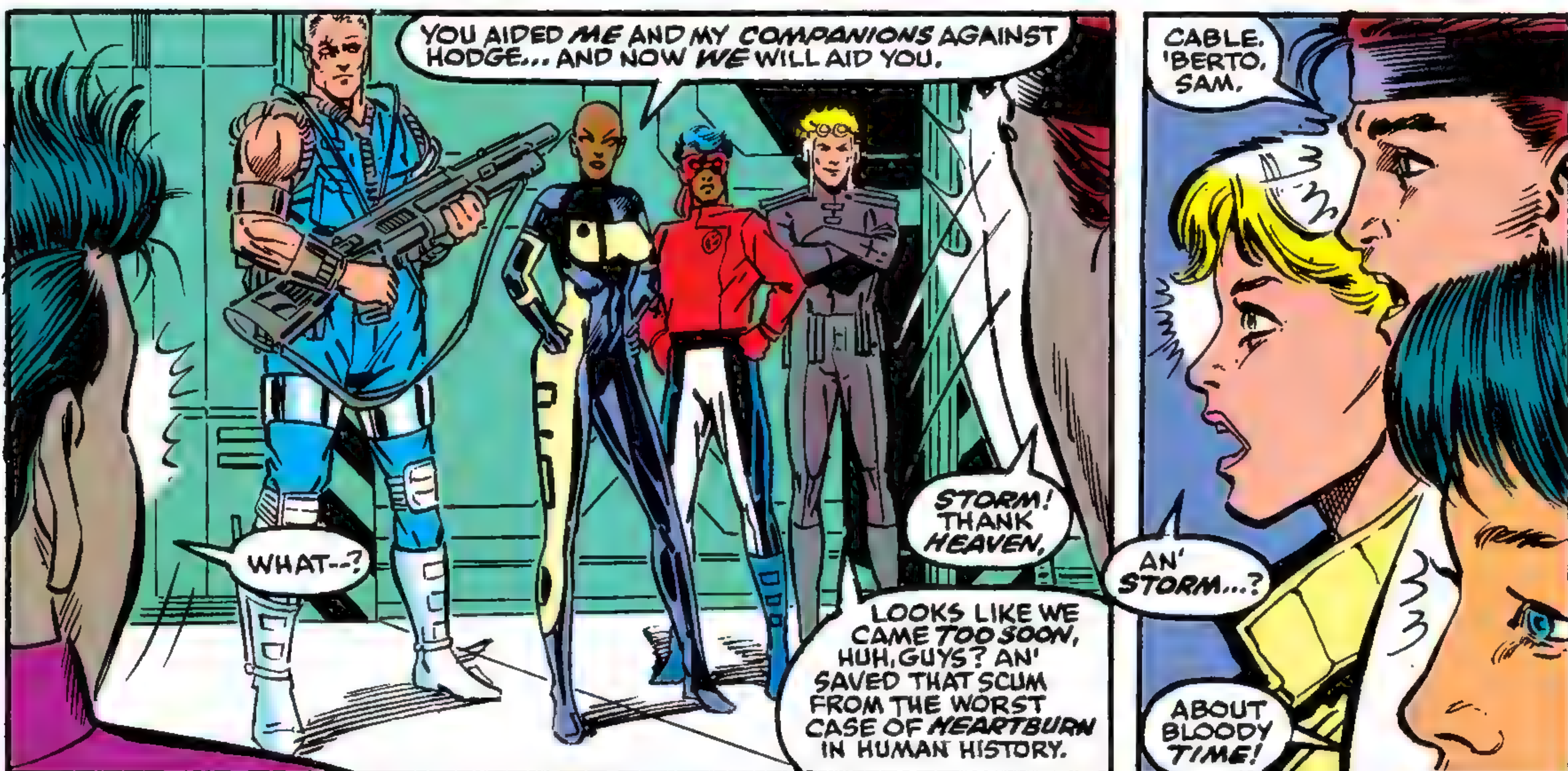
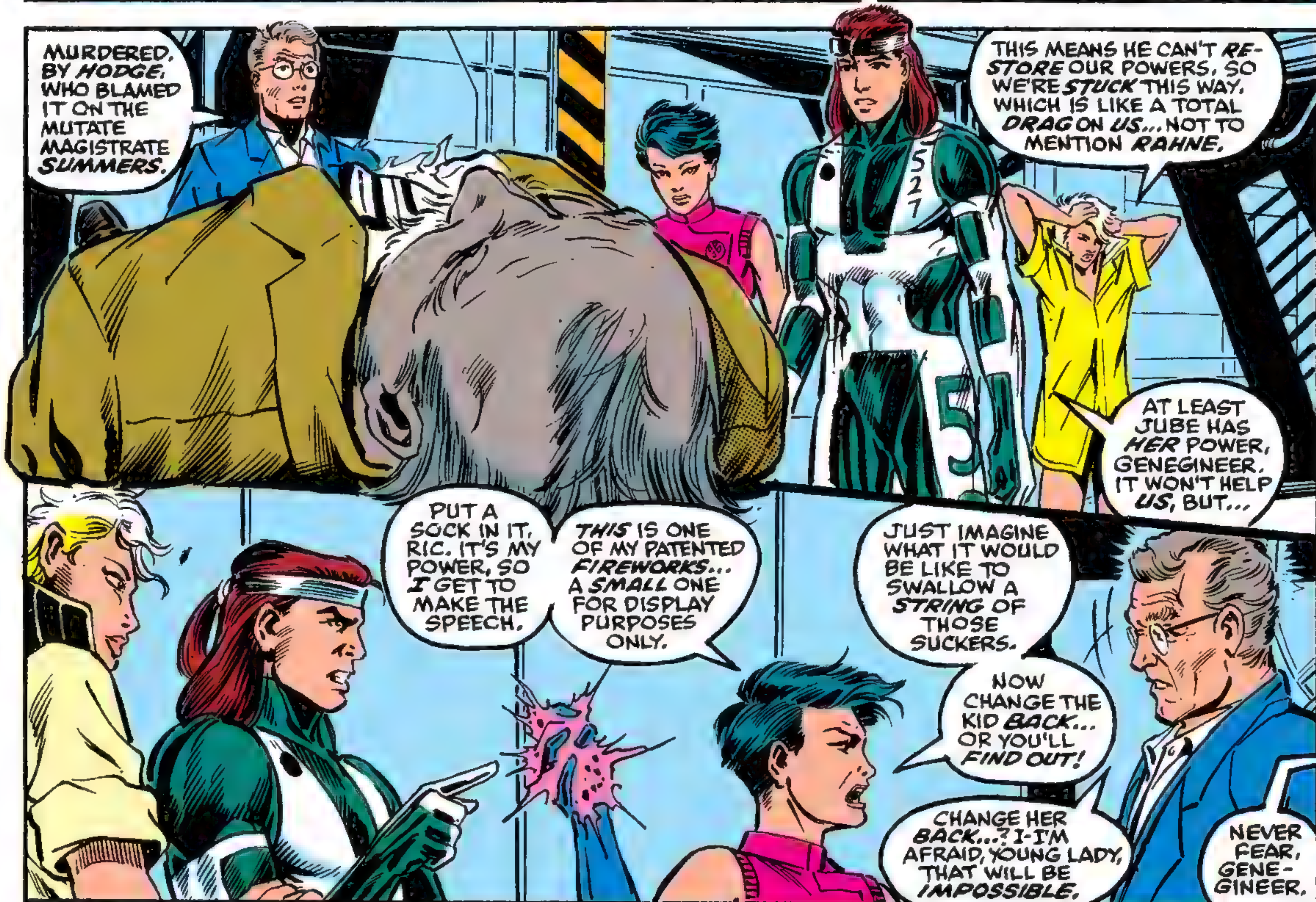
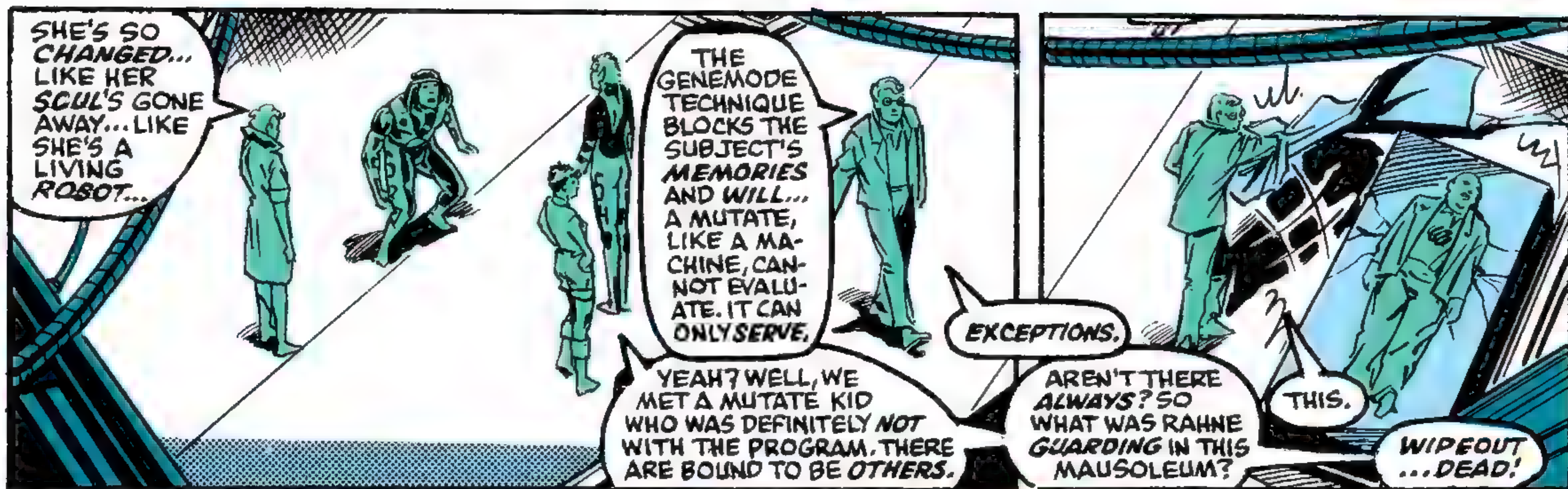


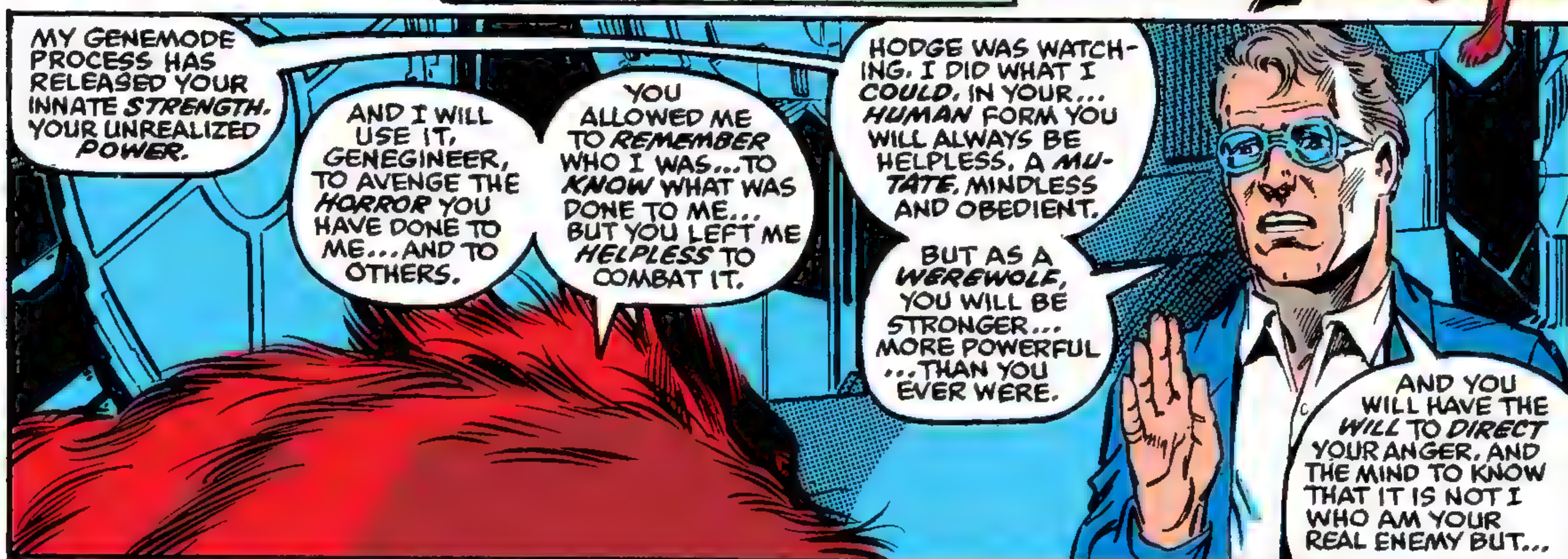
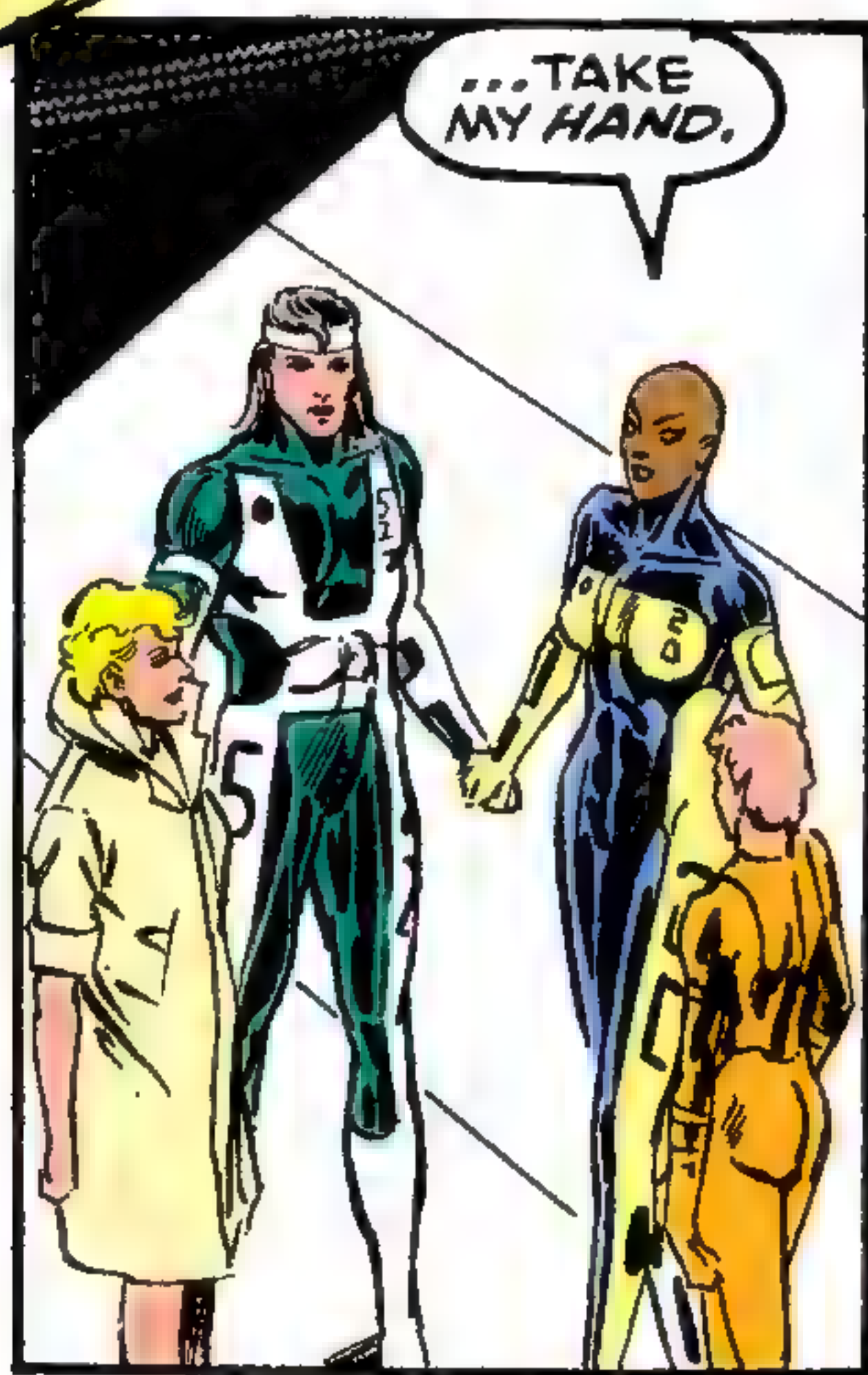
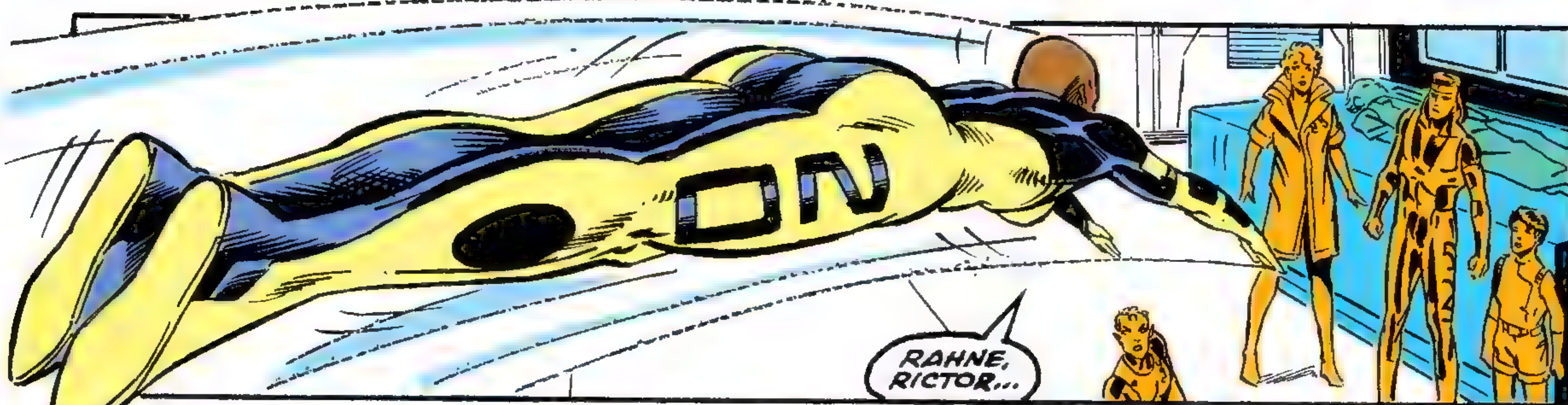
THERE'S NO WAY SCOTT CAN KNOW THE TRUTH. HE MUST BELIEVE I'M STILL THE VICTIM OF GENOSHAN BRAIN WASHING...

...AND THAT I'M ON HODGE'S SIDE, BUT I'M NOT, FINALLY I'M FREE...AND FULLY MYSELF.

AND I'LL TURN MY PLASMA EFFECT ON HODGE WITH SUCH FURY I'LL MELT HIM INTO SLAG.

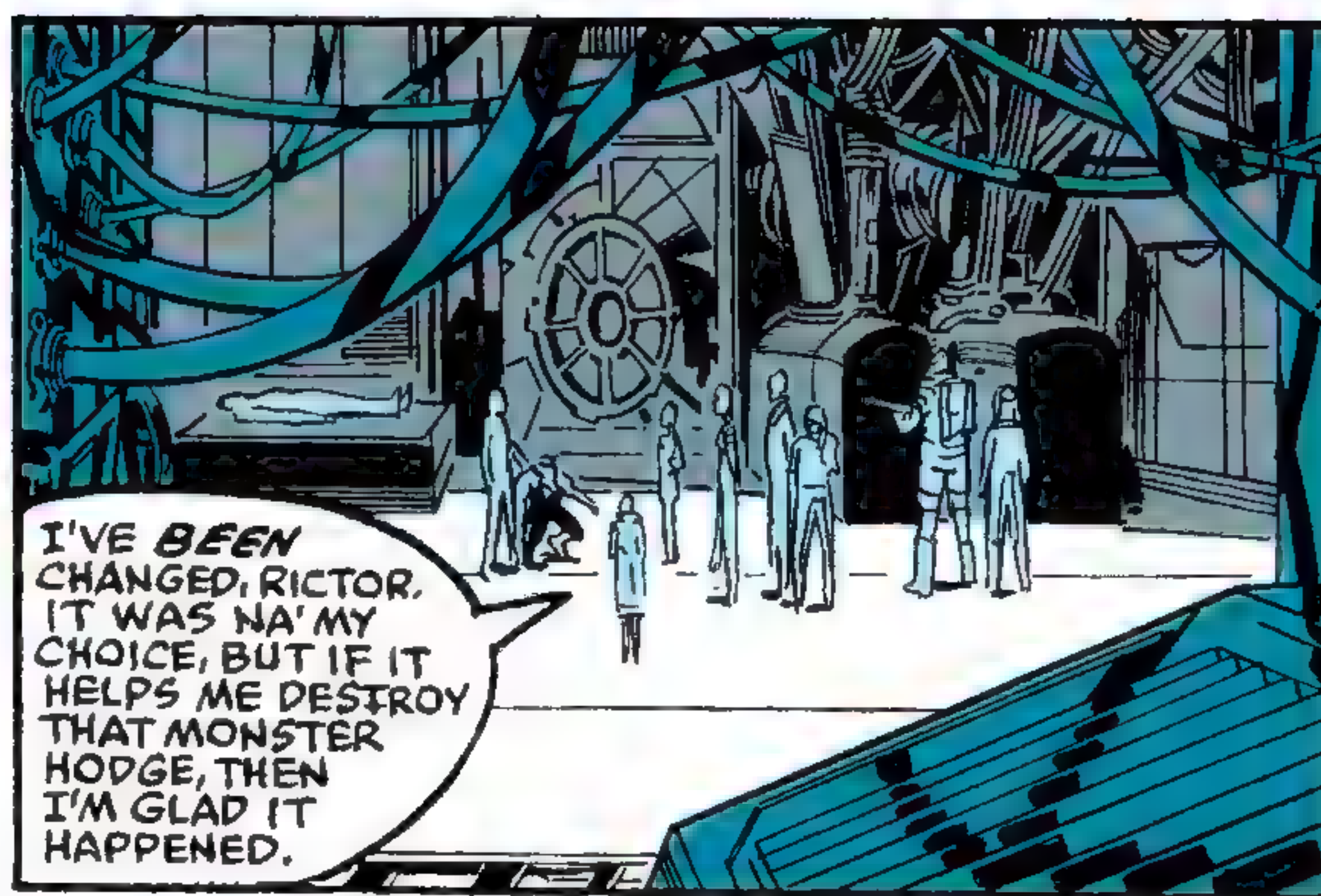








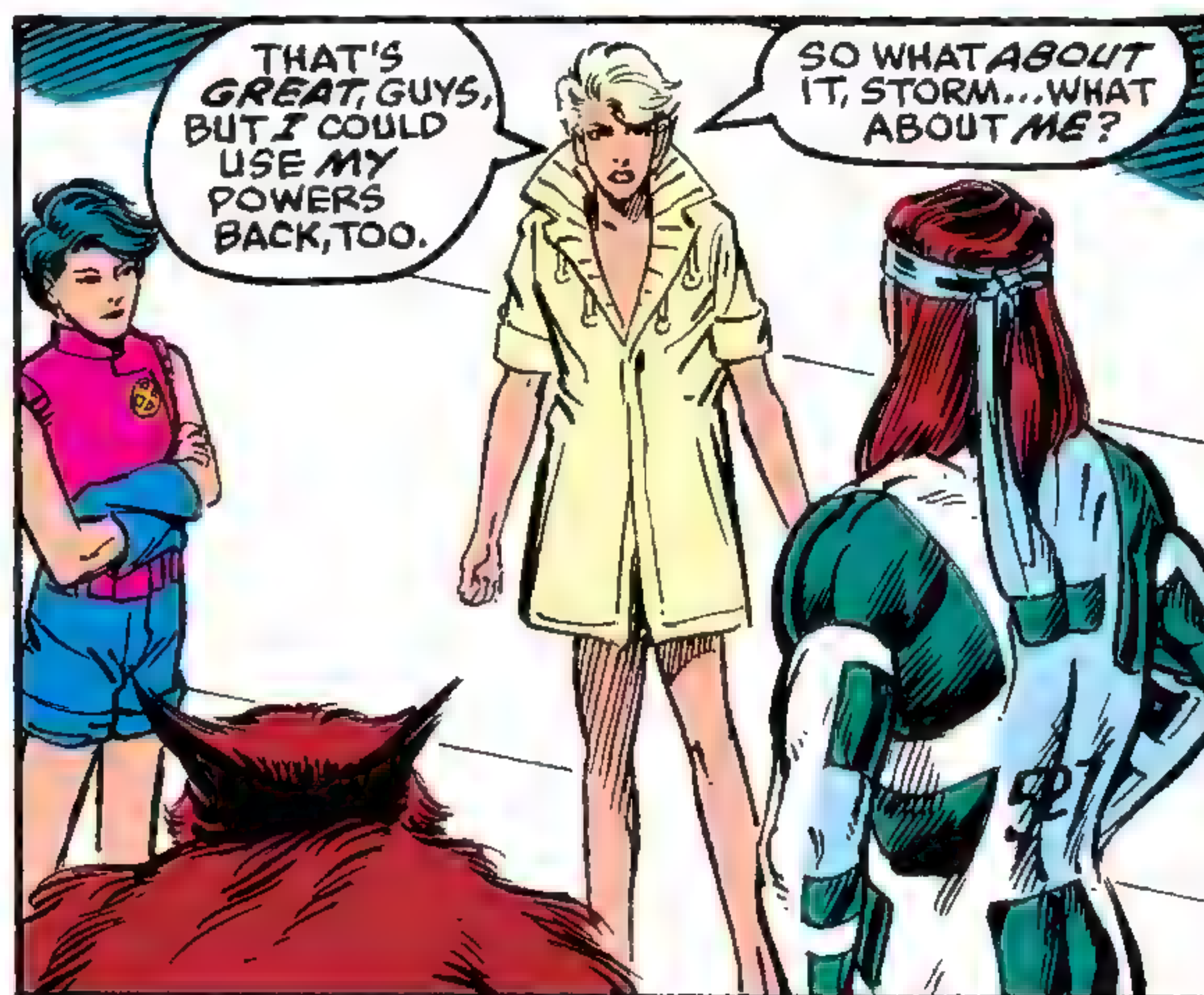
YOU'VE CHANGED, RAHNE. MORE THAN PHYSICALLY. IN YOUR...YOUR SOUL, YOU'RE NOT THE WAY YOU WERE.



I'VE BEEN CHANGED, RICTOR. IT WAS NA' MY CHOICE, BUT IF IT HELPS ME DESTROY THAT MONSTER HODGE, THEN I'M GLAD IT HAPPENED.

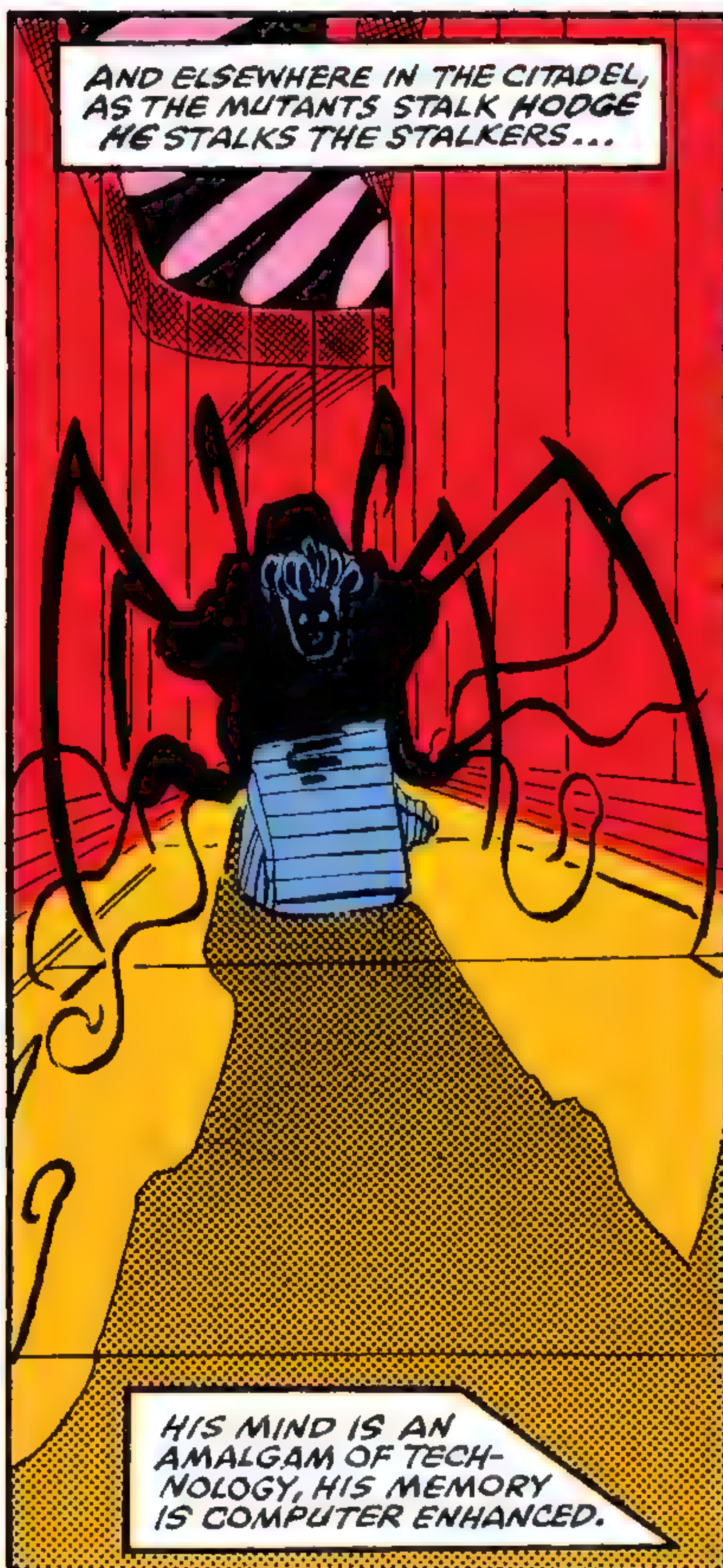


I...UNDER-
STAND. NOW
THAT MY POWERS
HAVE BEEN RE-
STORED, I HAVE
A SCORE TO
SETTLE WITH
HODGE MY-
SELF.



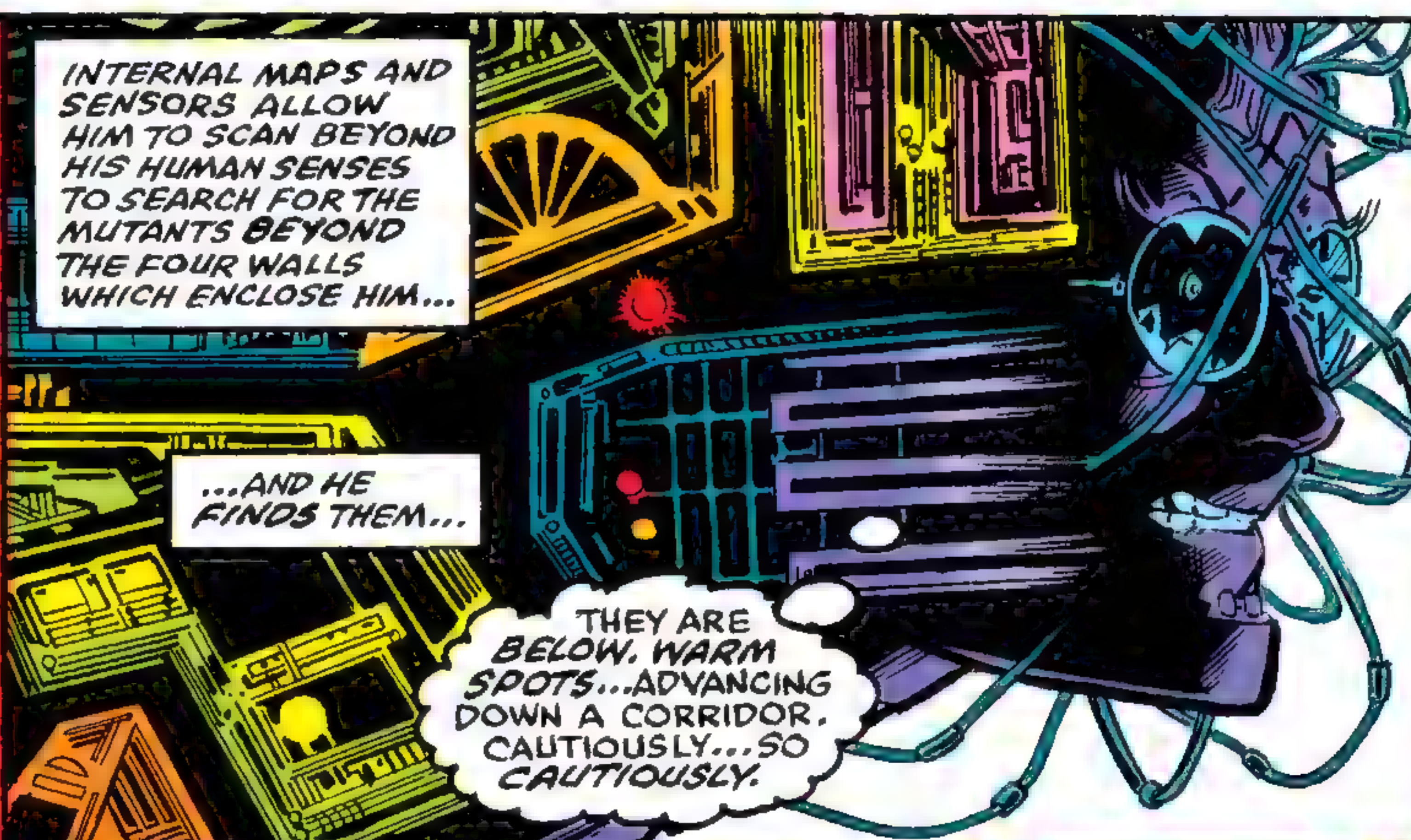
THAT'S GREAT, GUYS, BUT I COULD USE MY POWERS BACK, TOO.

SO WHAT ABOUT IT, STORM...WHAT ABOUT ME?



AND ELSEWHERE IN THE CITADEL, AS THE MUTANTS STALK HODGE HE STALKS THE STALKERS...

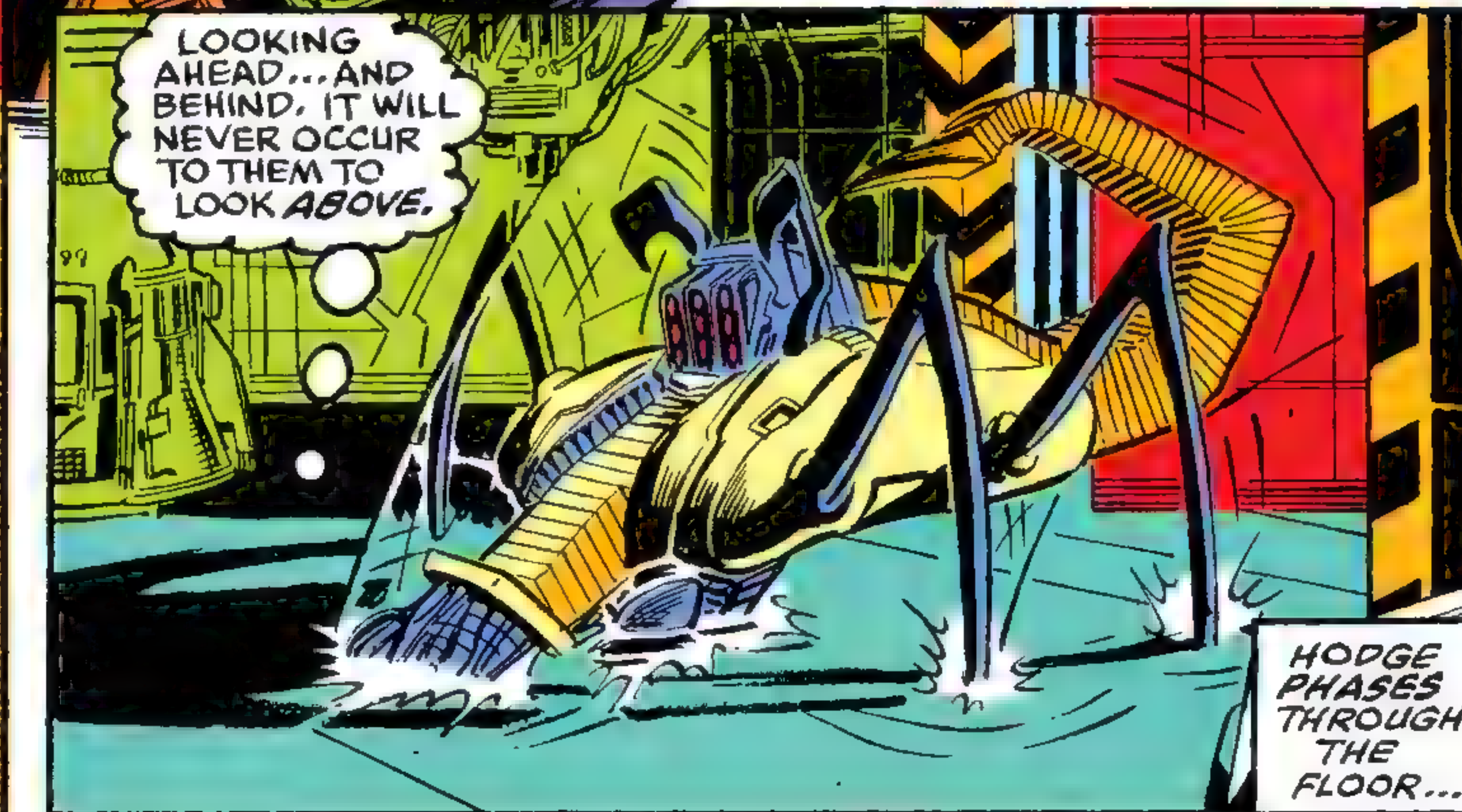
HIS MIND IS AN AMALGAM OF TECHNOLOGY, HIS MEMORY IS COMPUTER ENHANCED.



INTERNAL MAPS AND SENSORS ALLOW HIM TO SCAN BEYOND HIS HUMAN SENSES TO SEARCH FOR THE MUTANTS BEYOND THE FOUR WALLS WHICH ENCLOSE HIM...

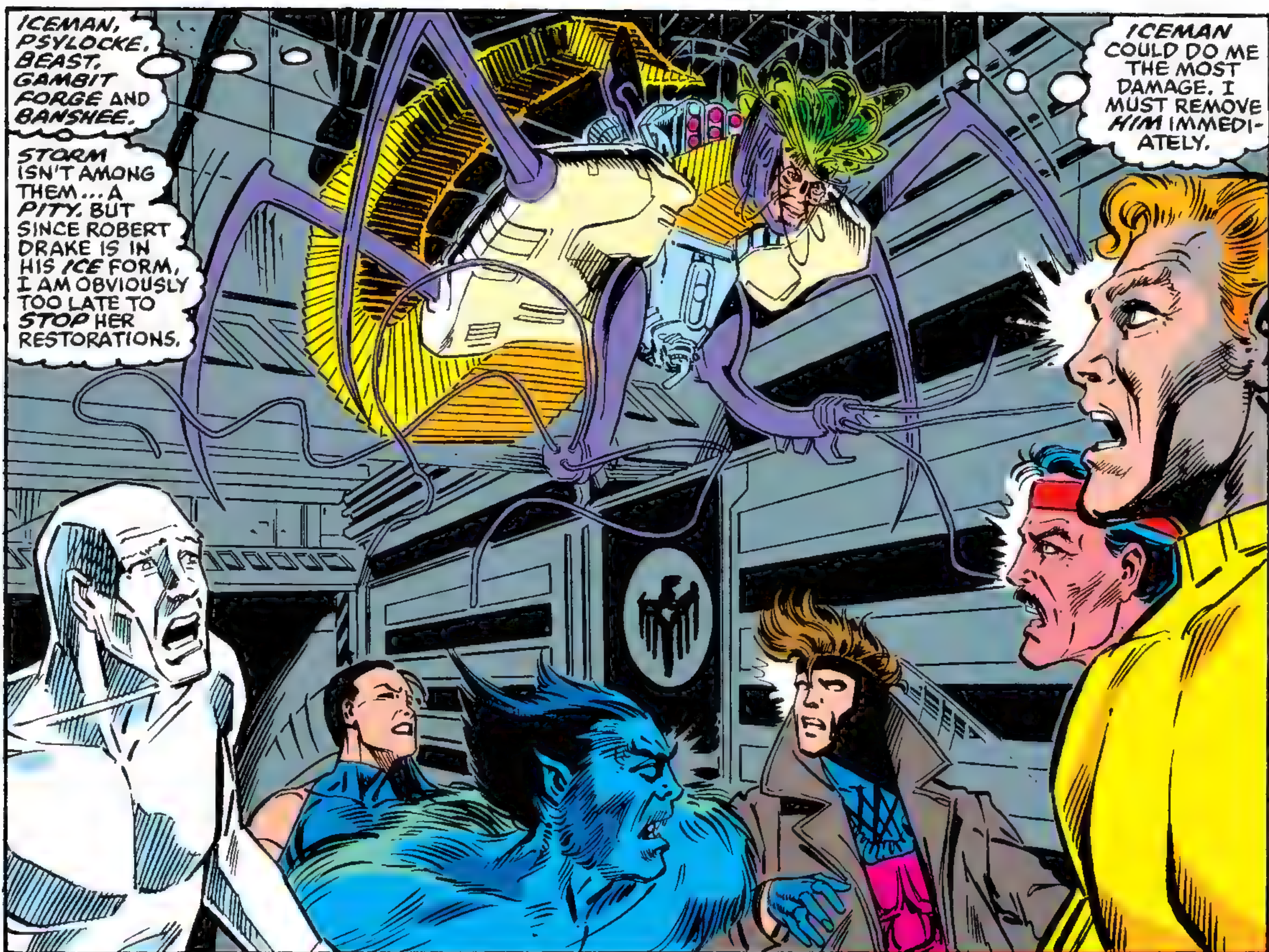
...AND HE FINDS THEM...

THEY ARE BELOW. WARM SPOTS...ADVANCING DOWN A CORRIDOR. CAUTIOUSLY...SO CAUTIOUSLY.



LOOKING AHEAD...AND BEHIND. IT WILL NEVER OCCUR TO THEM TO LOOK ABOVE.

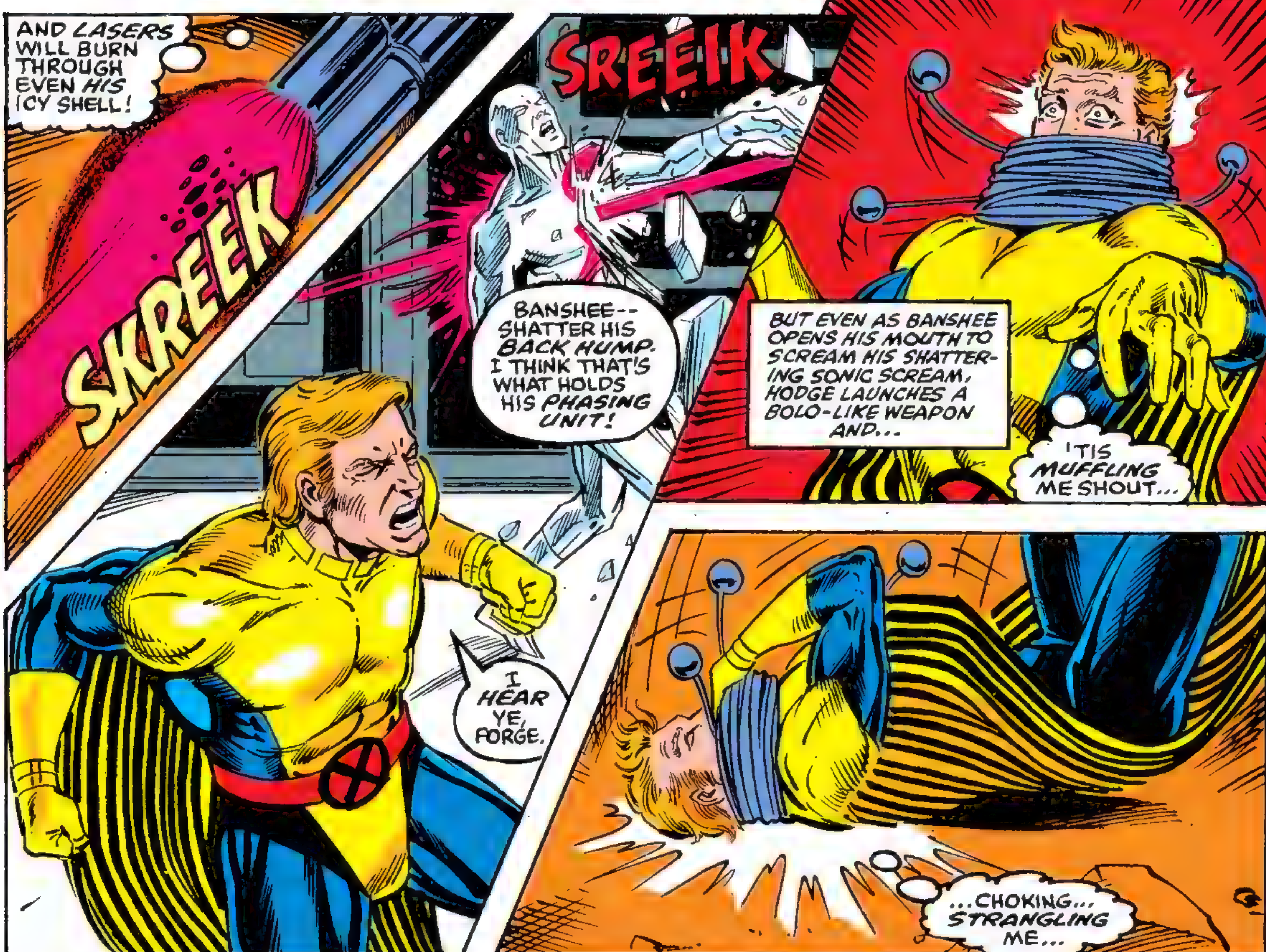
HODGE PHASES THROUGH THE FLOOR...



ICEMAN,
PSYLOCKE,
BEAST,
GAMBIT
FORGE AND
BANSHEE.

STORM
ISN'T AMONG
THEM... A
PITY, BUT
SINCE ROBERT
DRAKE IS IN
HIS ICE FORM,
I AM OBVIOUSLY
TOO LATE TO
STOP HER
RESTORATIONS.

ICEMAN
COULD DO ME
THE MOST
DAMAGE. I
MUST REMOVE
HIM IMMEDI-
ATELY.



AND LASERS
WILL BURN
THROUGH
EVEN HIS
ICY SHELL!

SKREEEK

SREEIK

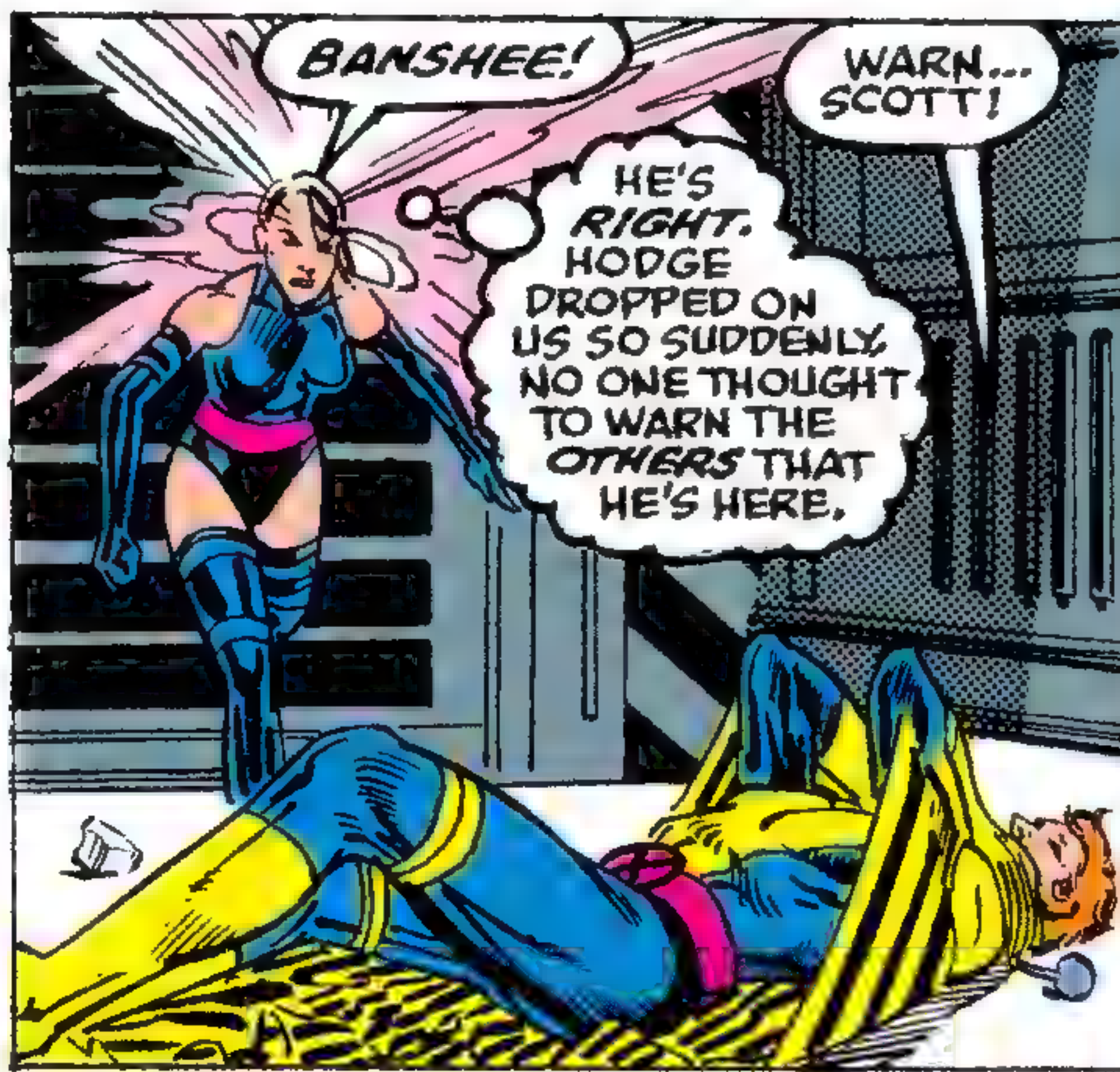
BANSHEE--
SHATTER HIS
BACK HUMP.
I THINK THAT'S
WHAT HOLDS
HIS PHASING
UNIT!

BUT EVEN AS BANSHEE
OPENS HIS MOUTH TO
SCREAM HIS SHATTER-
ING SONIC SCREAM,
HODGE LAUNCHES A
BOLO-LIKE WEAPON
AND...

IT'S
MUFFLING
ME SHOUT...

I
HEAR
YE,
FORGE.

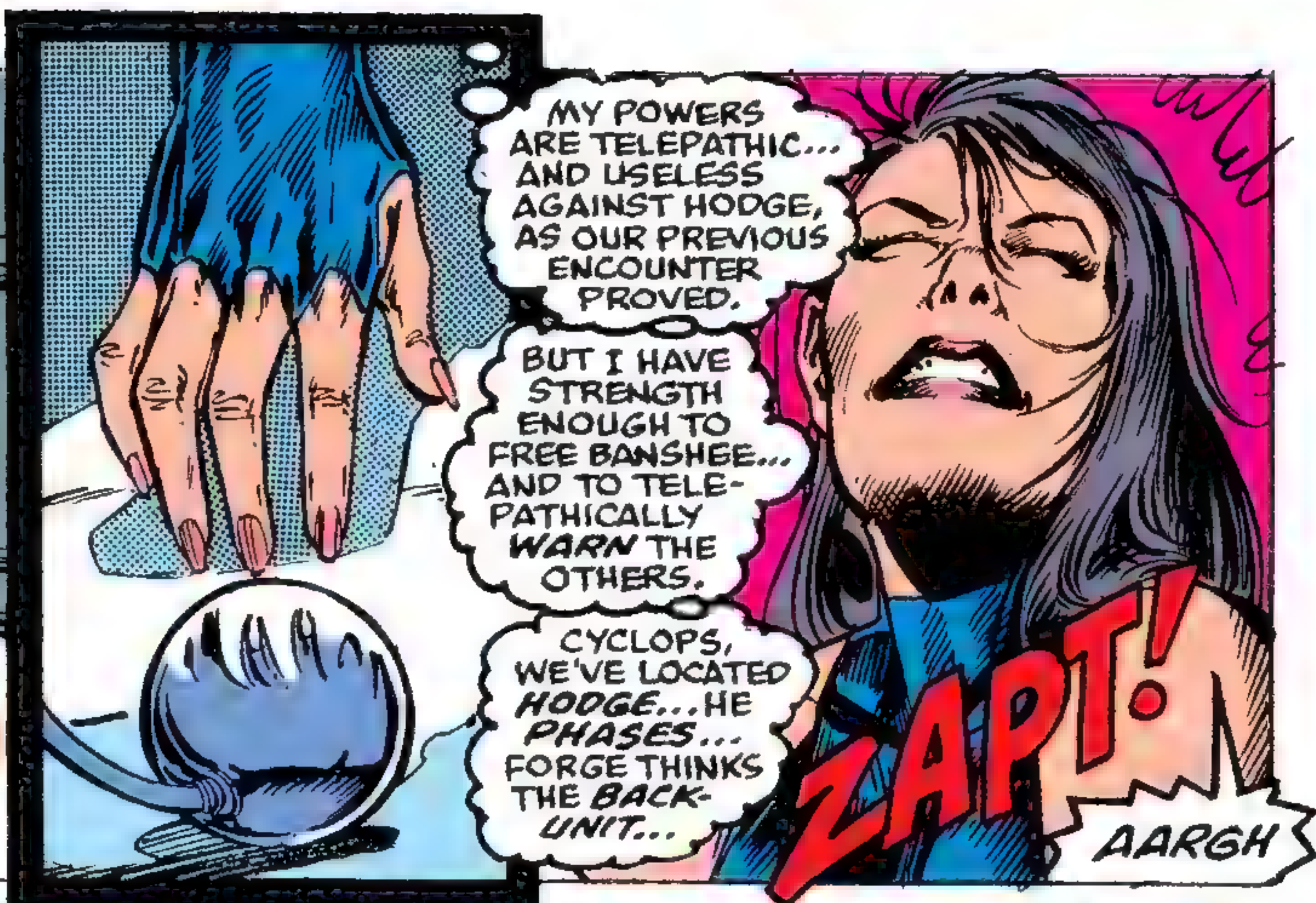
...CHOKING...
STRANGLING
ME...



BANSHEE!

WARN... SCOTT!

HE'S RIGHT. HODGE DROPPED ON US SO SUDDENLY. NO ONE THOUGHT TO WARN THE OTHERS THAT HE'S HERE.



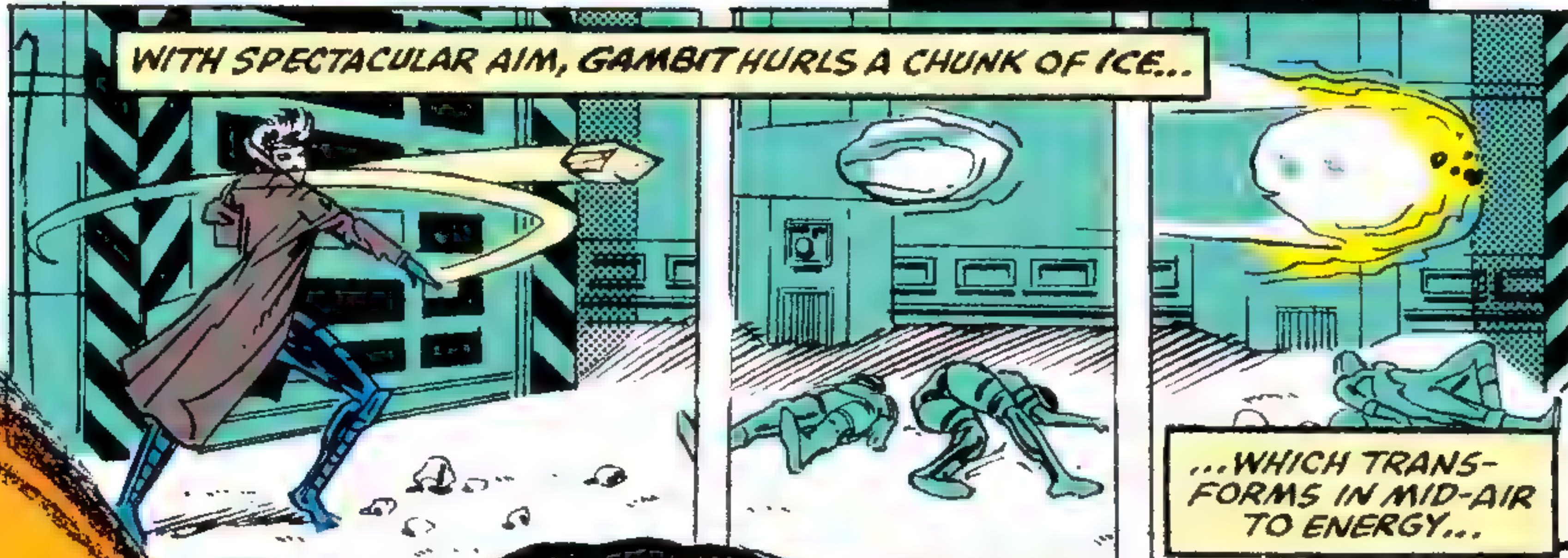
MY POWERS ARE TELEPATHIC... AND USELESS AGAINST HODGE, AS OUR PREVIOUS ENCOUNTER PROVED.

BUT I HAVE STRENGTH ENOUGH TO FREE BANSHEE... AND TO TELEPATHICALLY WARN THE OTHERS.

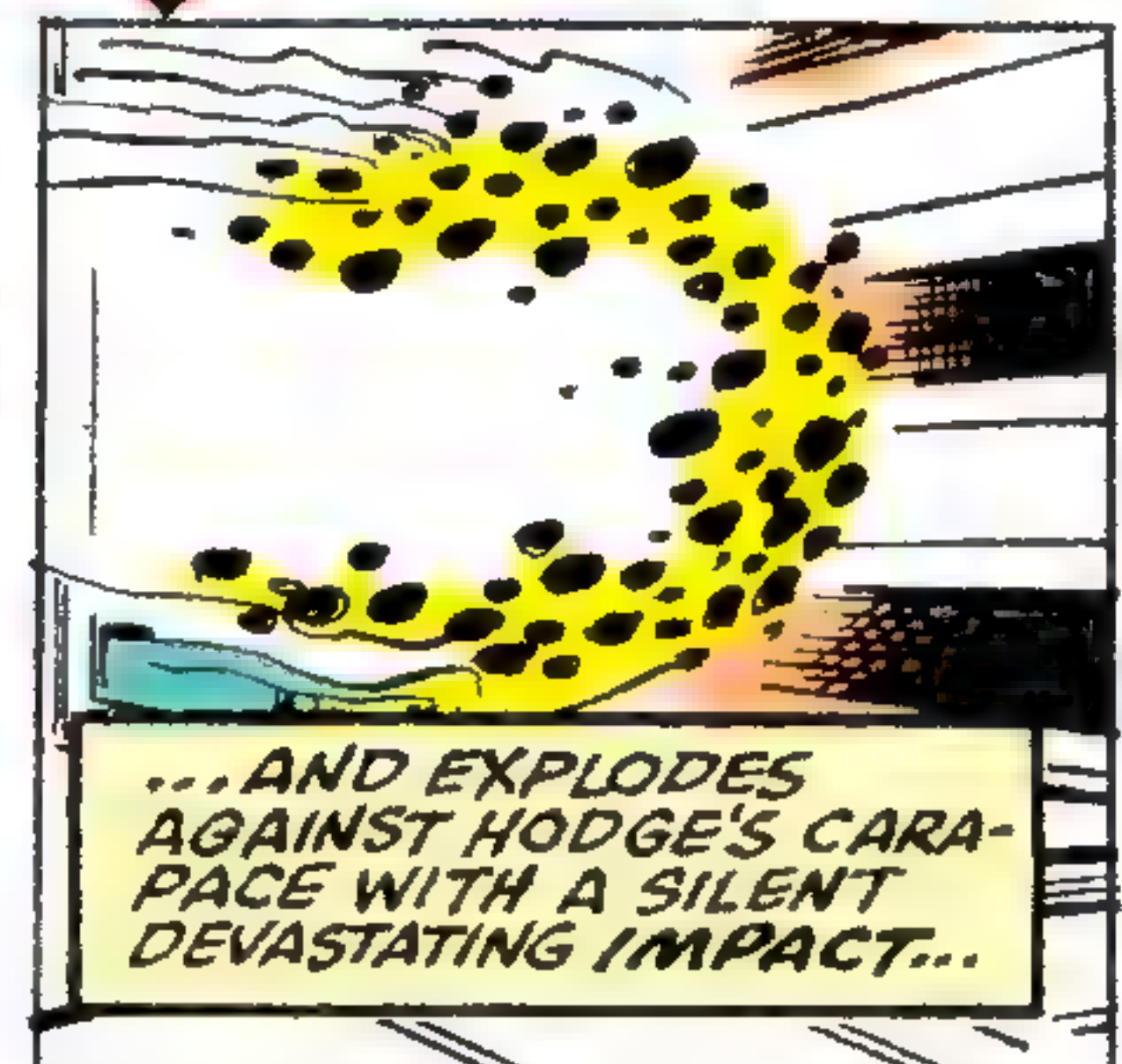
CYCLOPS, WE'VE LOCATED HODGE... HE PHASES... FORGE THINKS THE BACK-UNIT...

ZAPT!

AARGH



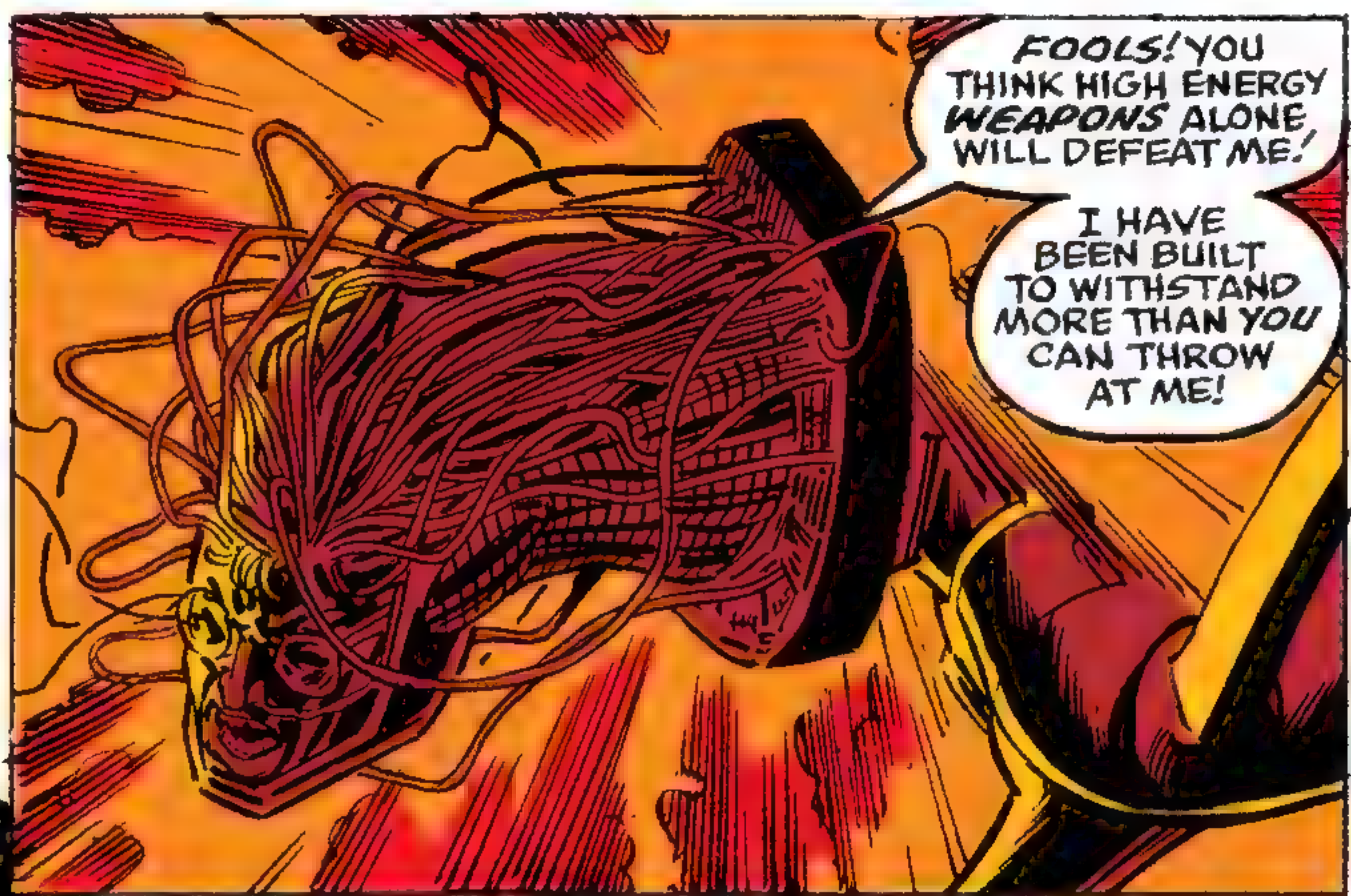
WITH SPECTACULAR AIM, GAMBIT HURLS A CHUNK OF ICE...



...AND EXPLODES AGAINST HODGE'S CARAPACE WITH A SILENT DEVASTATING IMPACT...



...EVEN AS FORGE'S WEAPON HITS HODGE FULL BLAST.



FOOLS! YOU THINK HIGH ENERGY WEAPONS ALONE WILL DEFEAT ME!

I HAVE BEEN BUILT TO WITHSTAND MORE THAN YOU CAN THROW AT ME!



MAYBE, HODGE OL' BOY... BUT IF I CAN RIP OUT ENOUGH WIRES...



...YOU'LL BE AN EMPTY TANK WITH NO ONE TO COMMAND IT.

MEANWHILE, STORM AND THE GENEGINEER FOLLOW CABLE, BOOM-BOOM, RIC, JUBILEE, SUNSPOT AND CANNONBALL INTO HODGE'S NEARLY DESTROYED LAB...

FORGE'S BOMB TOOK OUT A LOT OF HIS EQUIPMENT. TOO BAD IT DIDN'T TAKE HODGE WITH IT.

HIS MAIN COMPUTER IS STILL FEEDING HIM INFORMATION...THOUGH SOME OF HIS ENERGY SOURCES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED. HE'LL BE WEAKENED...

THERE'S WARLOCK, CABLE... ALL THAT'S LEFT OF HIM.

OH, 'LOCK. I TRIED SO HARD TO SAVE YOU. WHY COULDN'T I HAVE PREVENTED THIS HORROR?

YOU KEPT HODGE FROM STEALING WARLOCK'S SHAPE SHIFTING ABILITIES.

HAD HE GAINED THAT POWER, WE WOULD NEVER HAVE HAD A CHANCE AGAINST HIM.

AH DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE ANY PLEASANT SURPRISES FOR US CONCERNIN' WARLOCK?

I WASN'T THERE TO INTERVENE. THE EFFORT TO APPROPRIATE HIS POWER WAS ENTIRELY HODGE'S.

AND WARLOCK... THE KINDEST, GENTLEST, MOST INNOCENT AMONG US... DIED...

... BECAUSE THAT MUTANT-HATING MONSTER DECIDED TO TAKE 'LOCK'S POWER.

LET'S SEE HOW HE REACTS WHEN WE TAKE HIS!

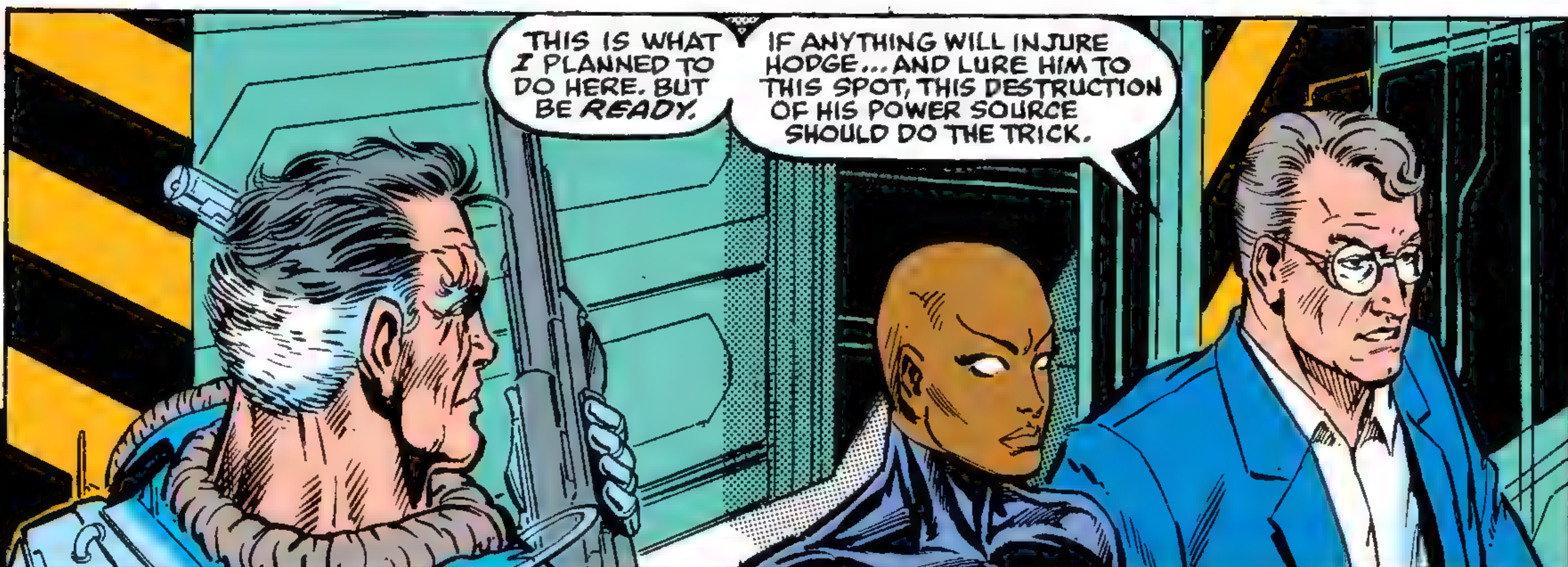
BA-RUMMMMBLE! ROOM!

YEAH, MAN. LET'S SMASH THE EQUIPMENT THAT'S EMPOWERING HODGE...

AND MAYBE, JUST MAYBE, IT WILL WEAKEN HIM ENOUGH SO WE CAN TAKE HIM OUT.

AND A FEW... 3...2...1... TIMEBOMBS...

...PLUS SOME SPECIALLY DESIGNED FIREWORKS... JUST MIGHT DO THE TRICK.



THIS IS WHAT I PLANNED TO DO HERE. BUT BE READY.

IF ANYTHING WILL INJURE HODGE... AND LURE HIM TO THIS SPOT, THIS DESTRUCTION OF HIS POWER SOURCE SHOULD DO THE TRICK.

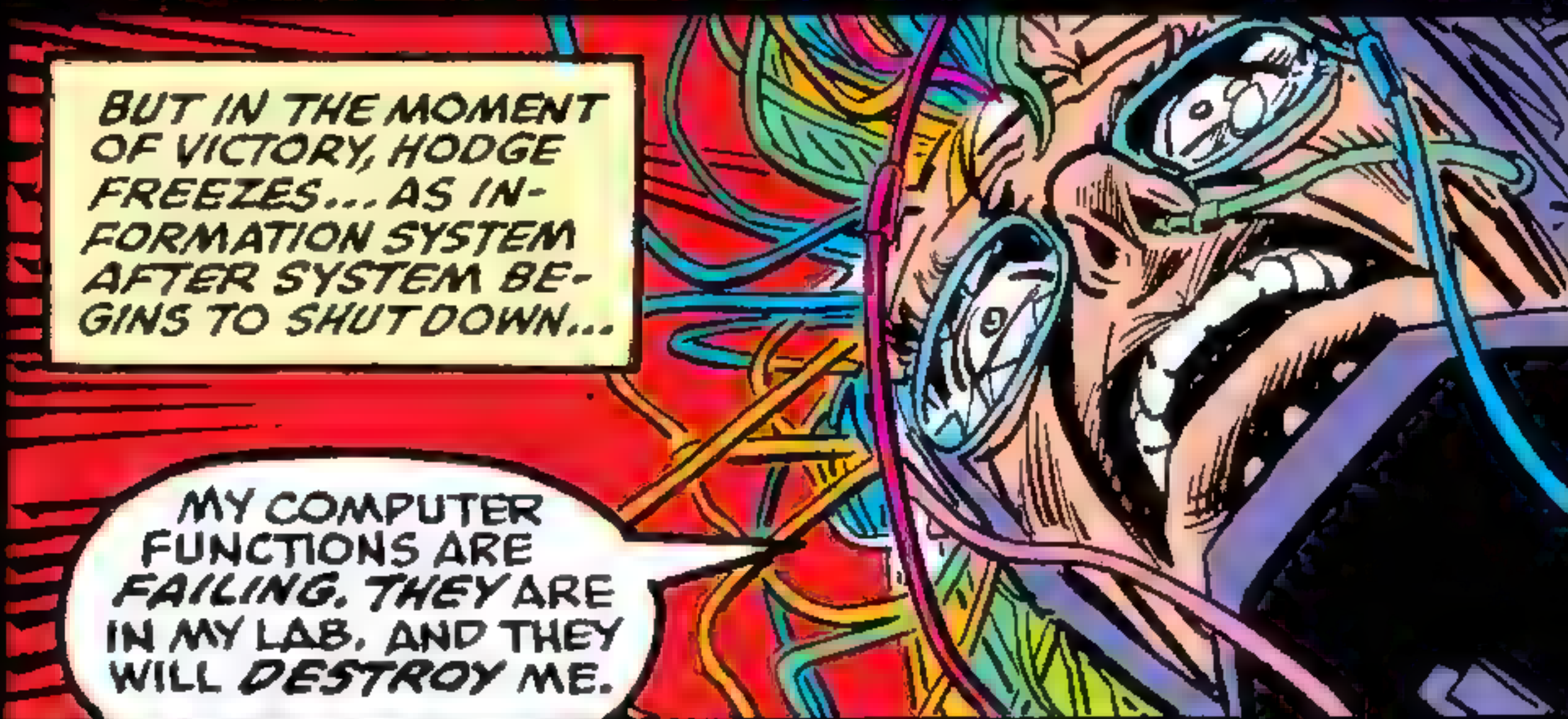


WHILE FLOORS ABOVE...

A BRAVE EFFORT, BEAST. BUT FUTILE.

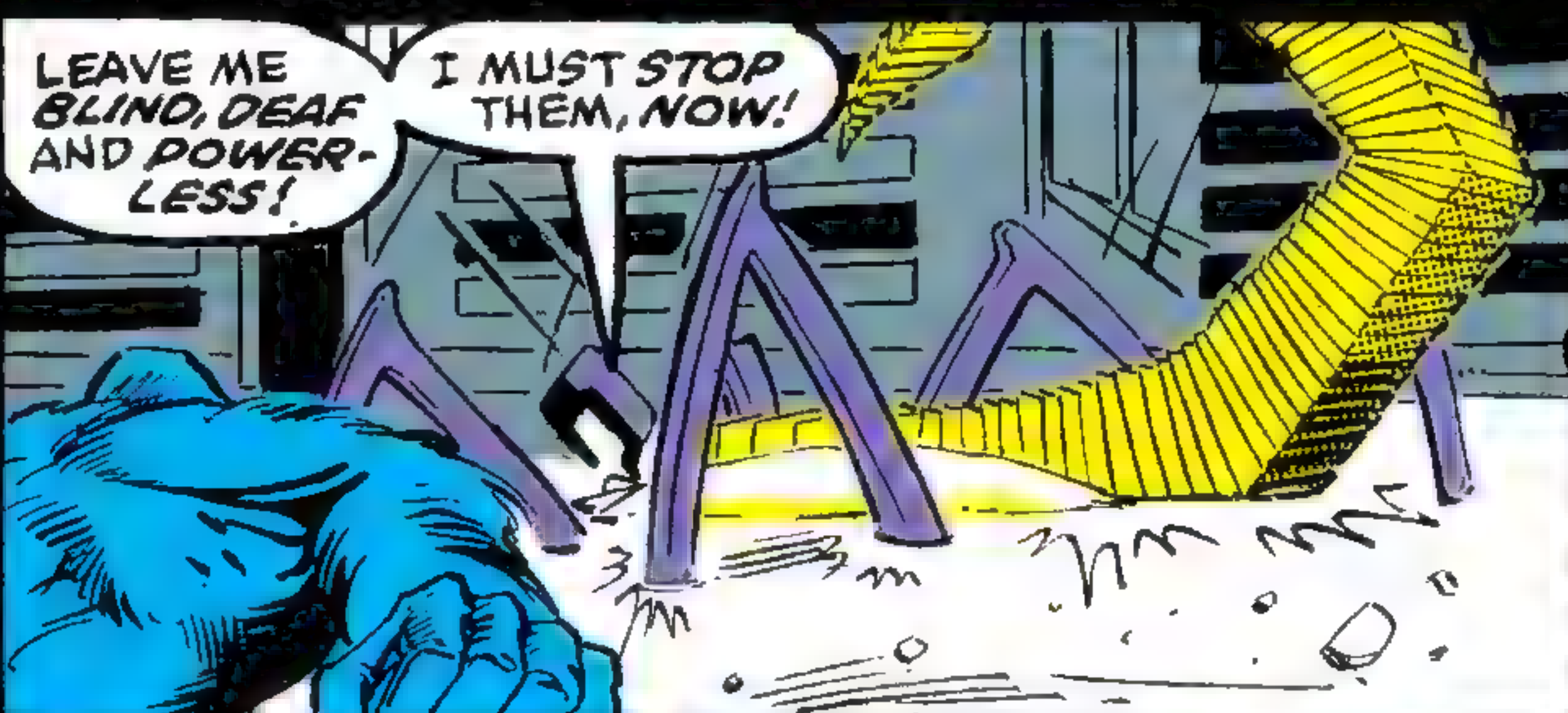
WHILE YOU TRIED TO RIP OUT MY GUTS, I TOOK OUT FORGE AND GAMBIT... AS I WILL NOW DESTROY YOU!

WHAKT!



BUT IN THE MOMENT OF VICTORY, HODGE FREEZES... AS INFORMATION SYSTEM AFTER SYSTEM BEGINS TO SHUT DOWN...

MY COMPUTER FUNCTIONS ARE FAILING. THEY ARE IN MY LAB, AND THEY WILL DESTROY ME.



LEAVE ME BLIND, DEAF AND POWERLESS!

I MUST STOP THEM, NOW!



AND, FROM THE CEILING OF HODGE'S LAB...

THOOM

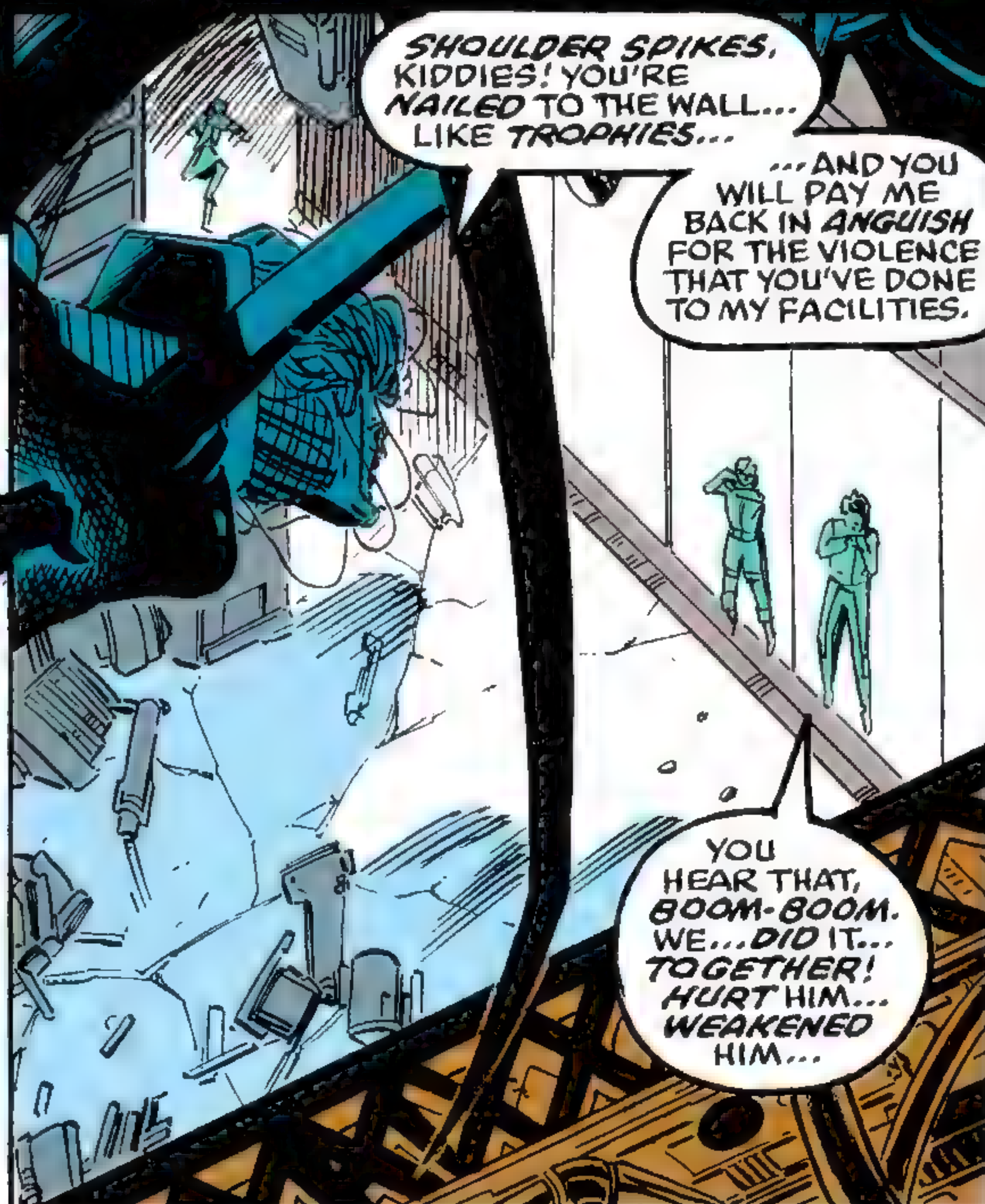
THOOM

THOOM

YOW!

AARGH!

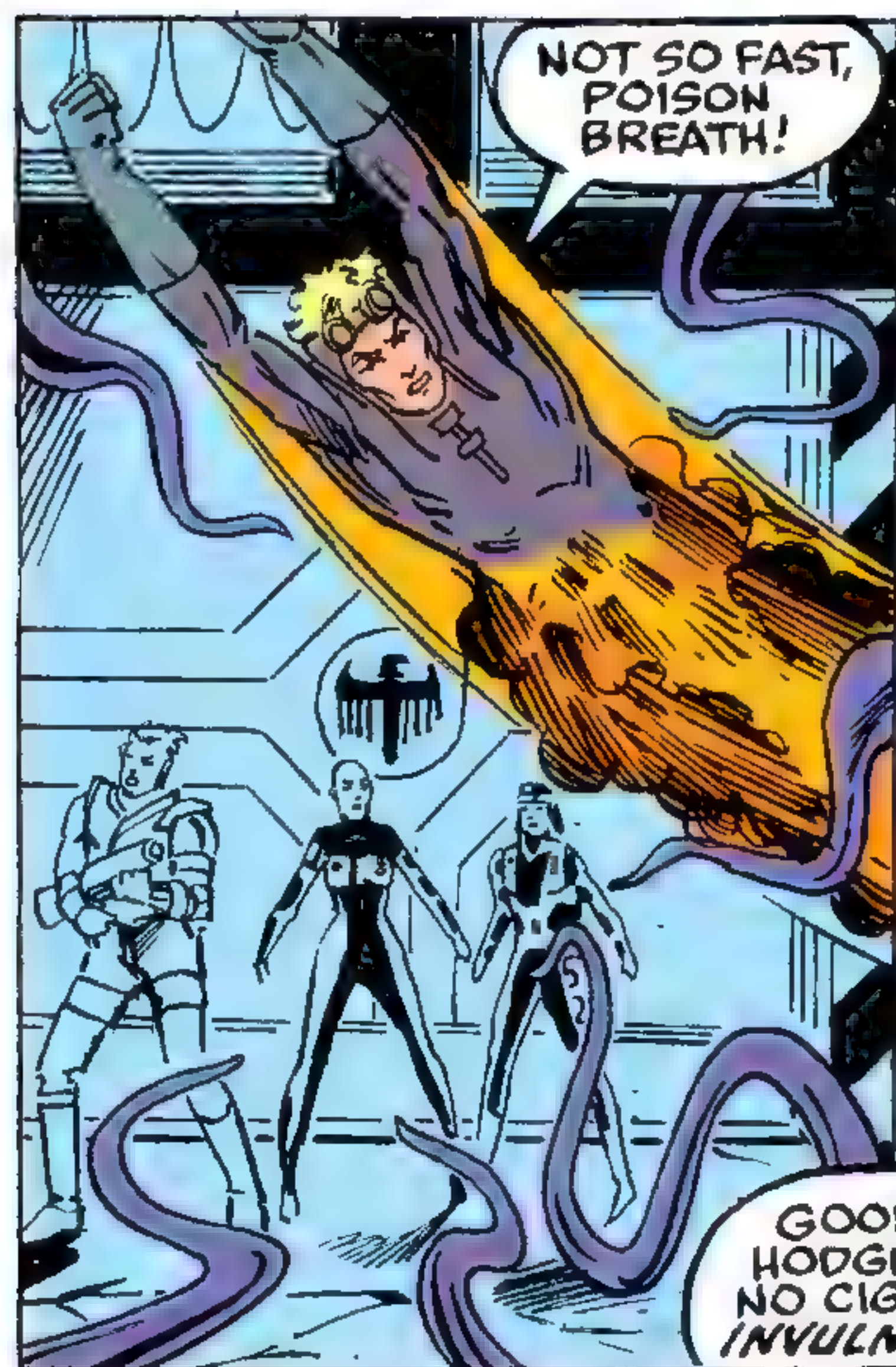
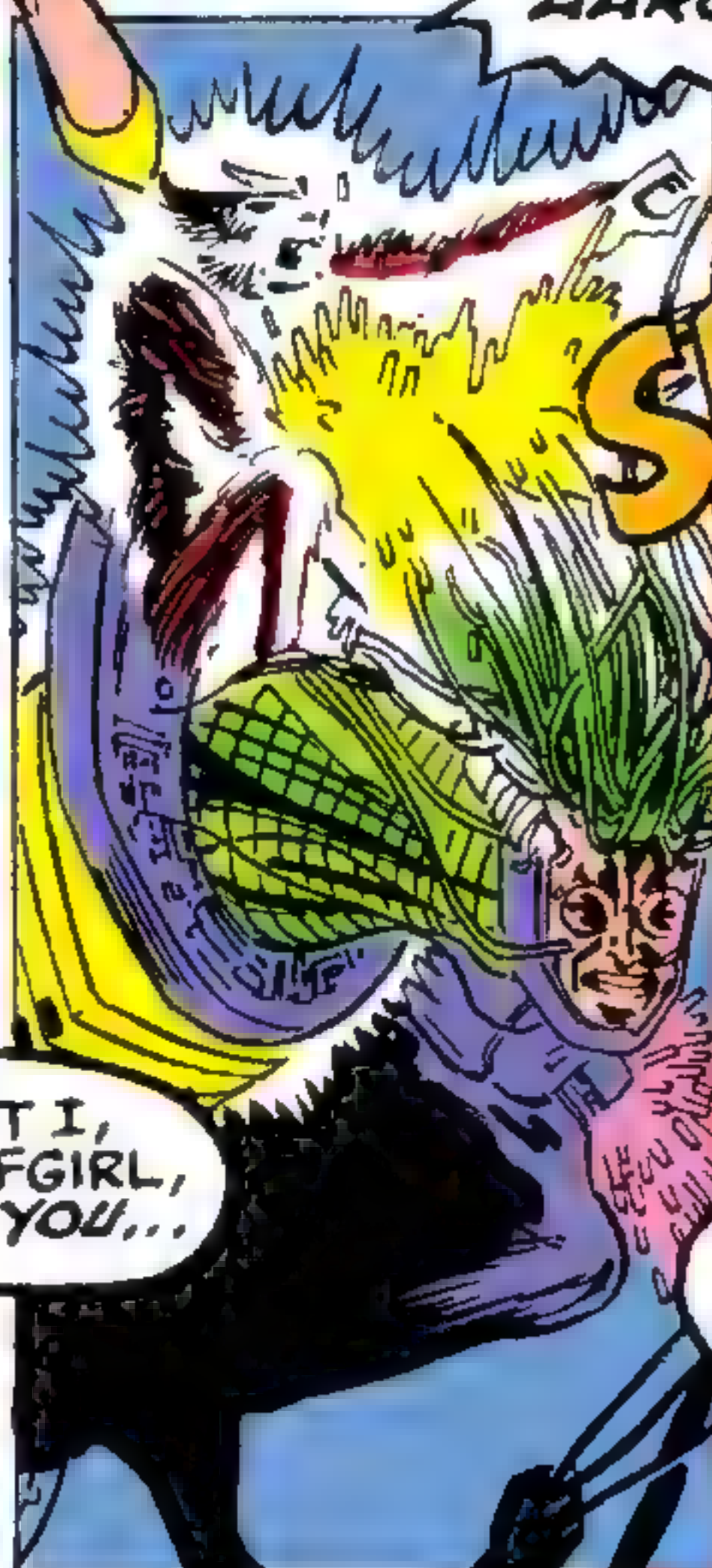
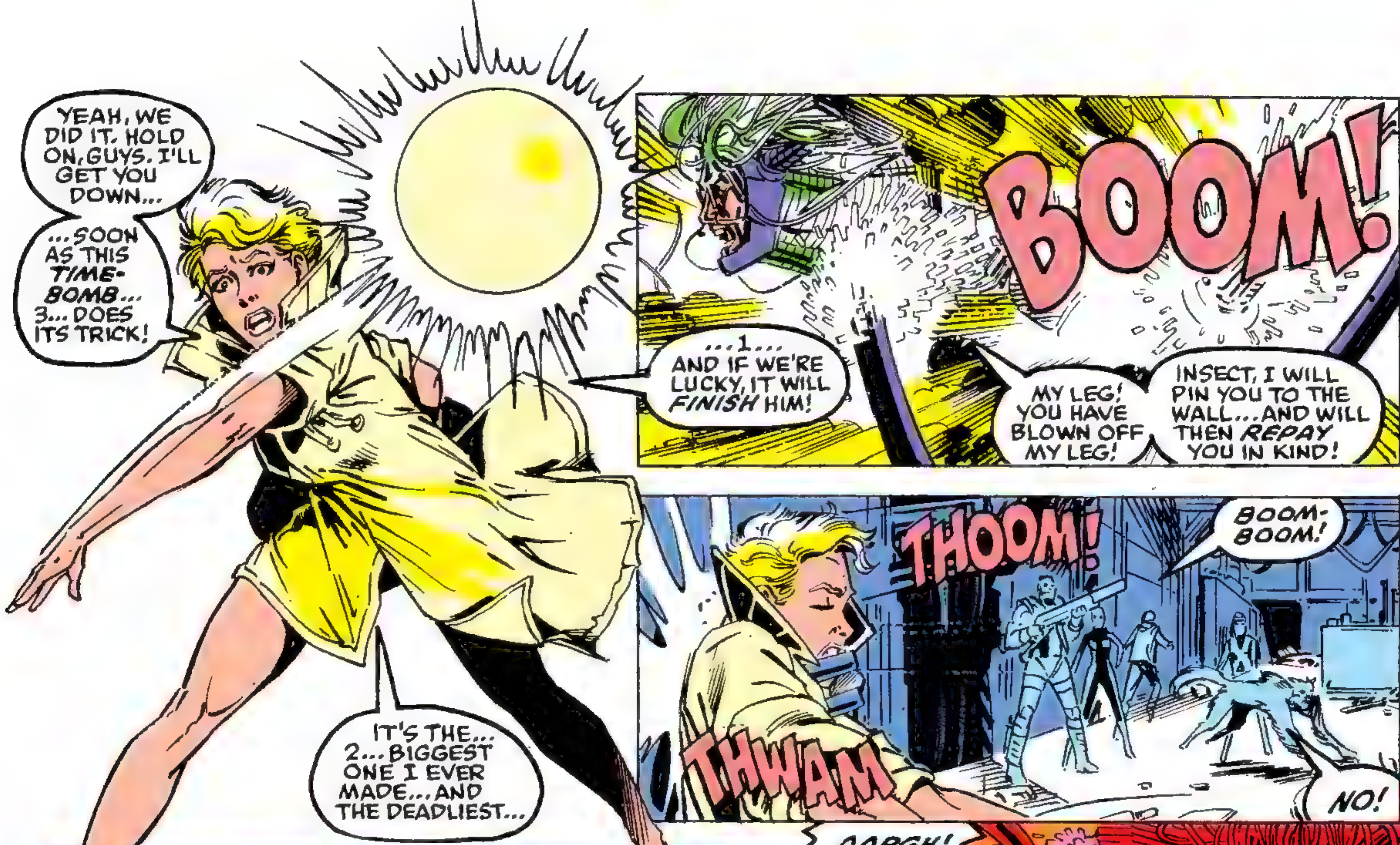
...FOUR PROJECTILES FIND THEIR MARKS...



SHOULDER SPIKES, KIDDIES! YOU'RE NAILED TO THE WALL... LIKE TROPHIES...

...AND YOU WILL PAY ME BACK IN ANGUISH FOR THE VIOLENCE THAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY FACILITIES.

YOU HEAR THAT, BOOM-BOOM. WE... DID IT... TOGETHER! HURT HIM... WEAKENED HIM...





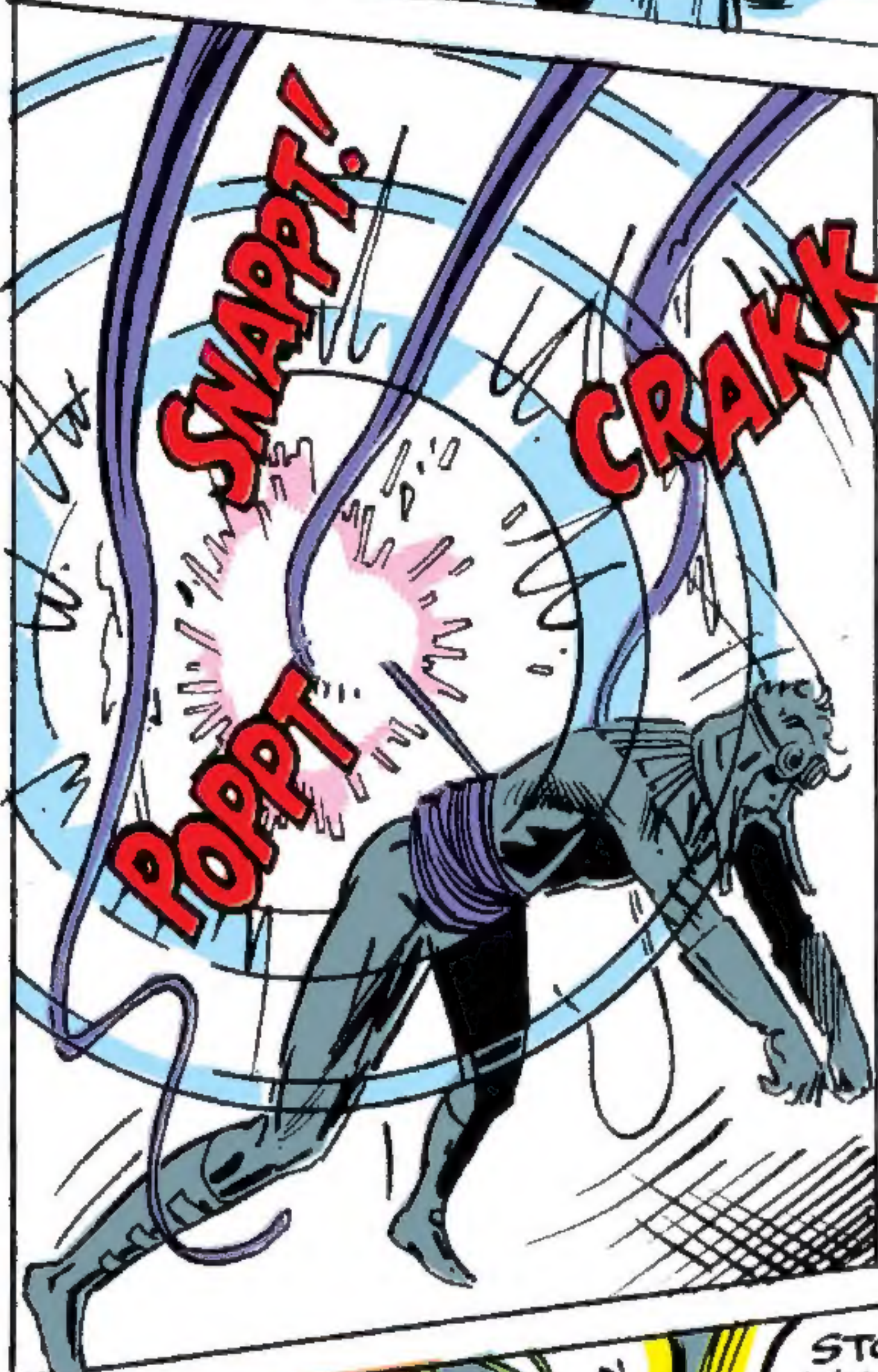
BA-BLAM!

HODGE IS FAST AND DEADLY, BUT WE KNOW THAT HE CAN BE HURT.

FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IS TO FREE CANNONBALL.

RUMMBLE!

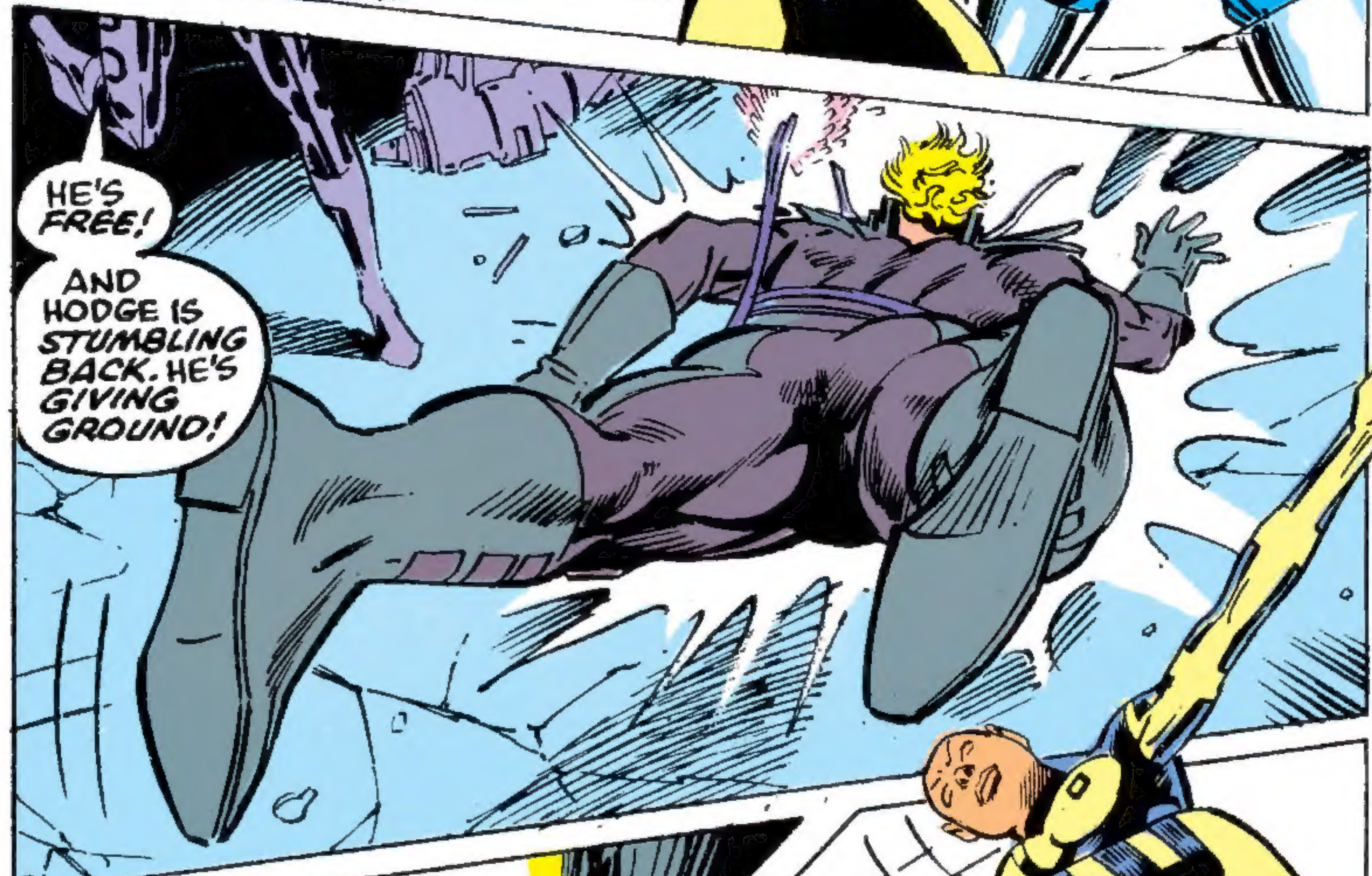
STORM, FREEZE THE TENTACLES. RICTOR, HIT IT WITH EVERYTHING YOU HAVE.



SNAPPT!

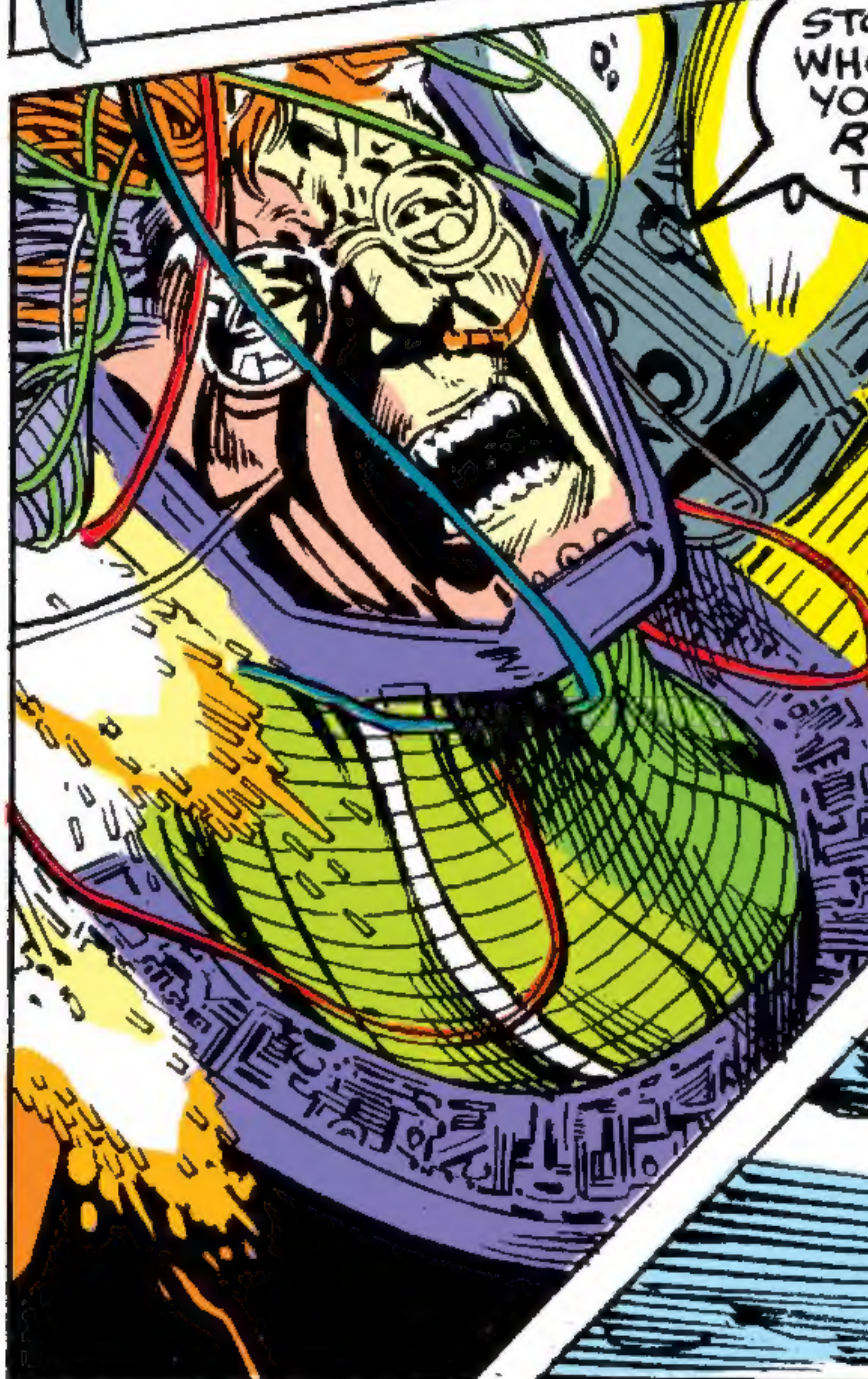
CRAKK

POPP!



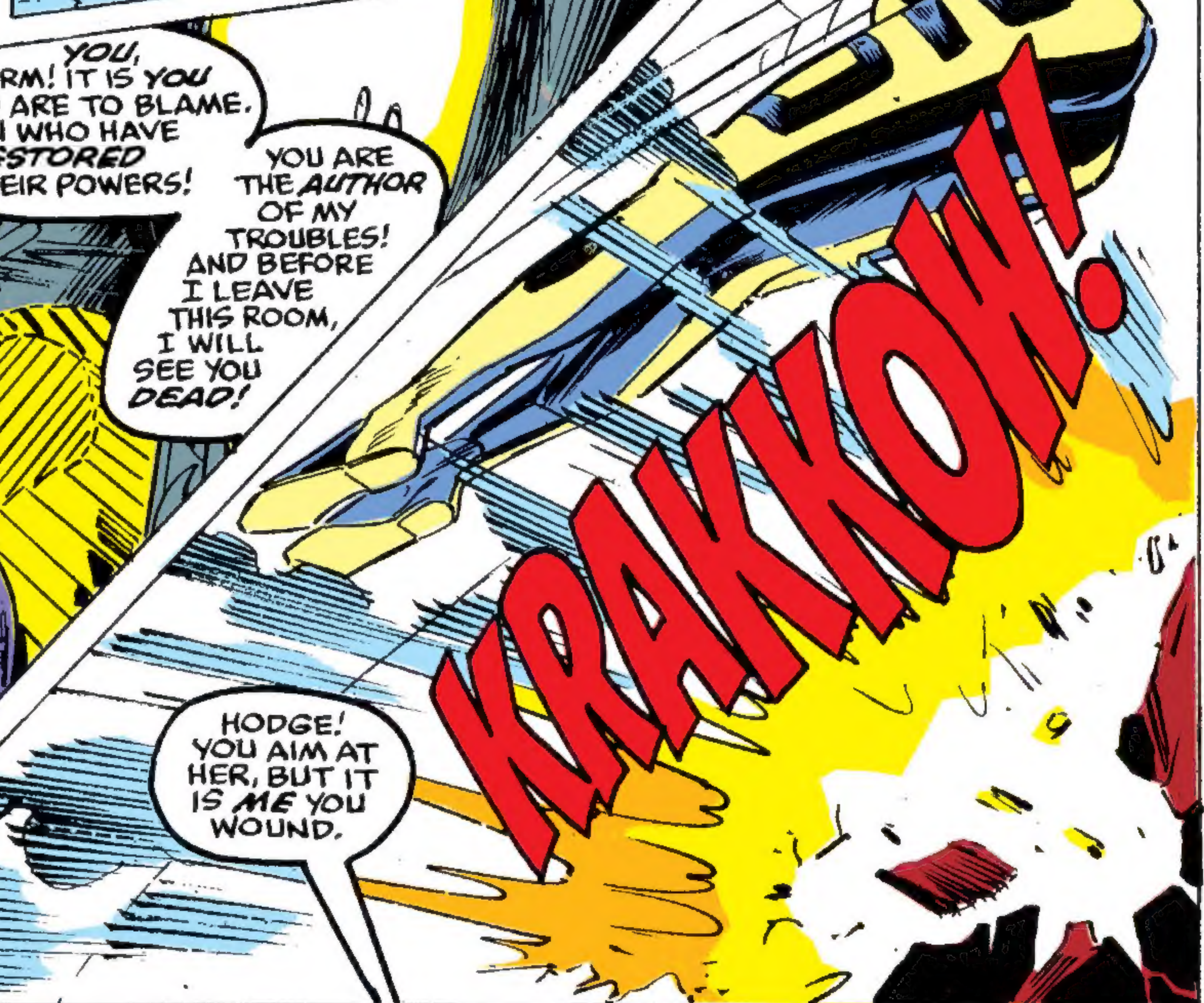
HE'S FREE!

AND HODGE IS STUMBLING BACK. HE'S GIVING GROUND!



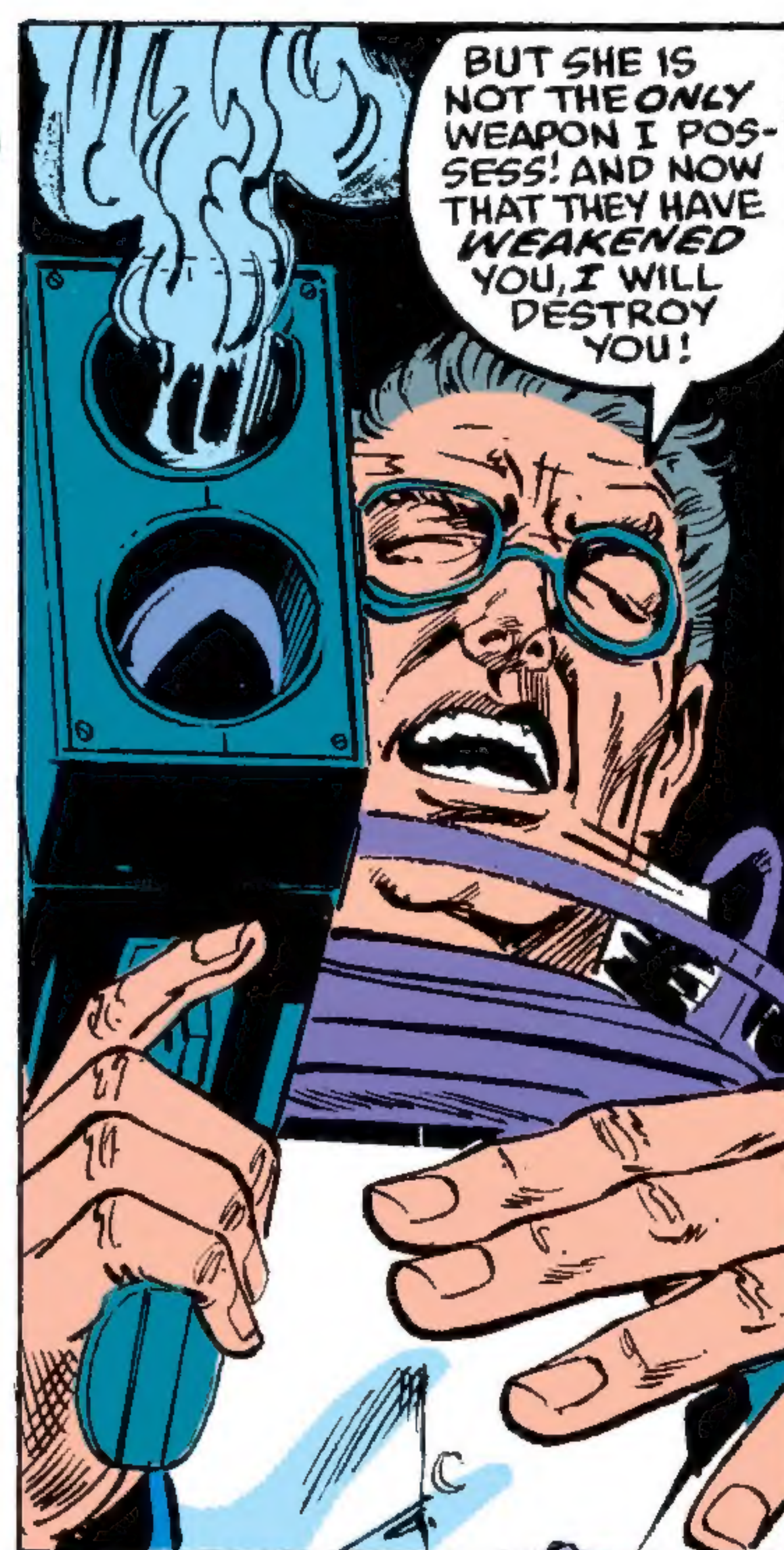
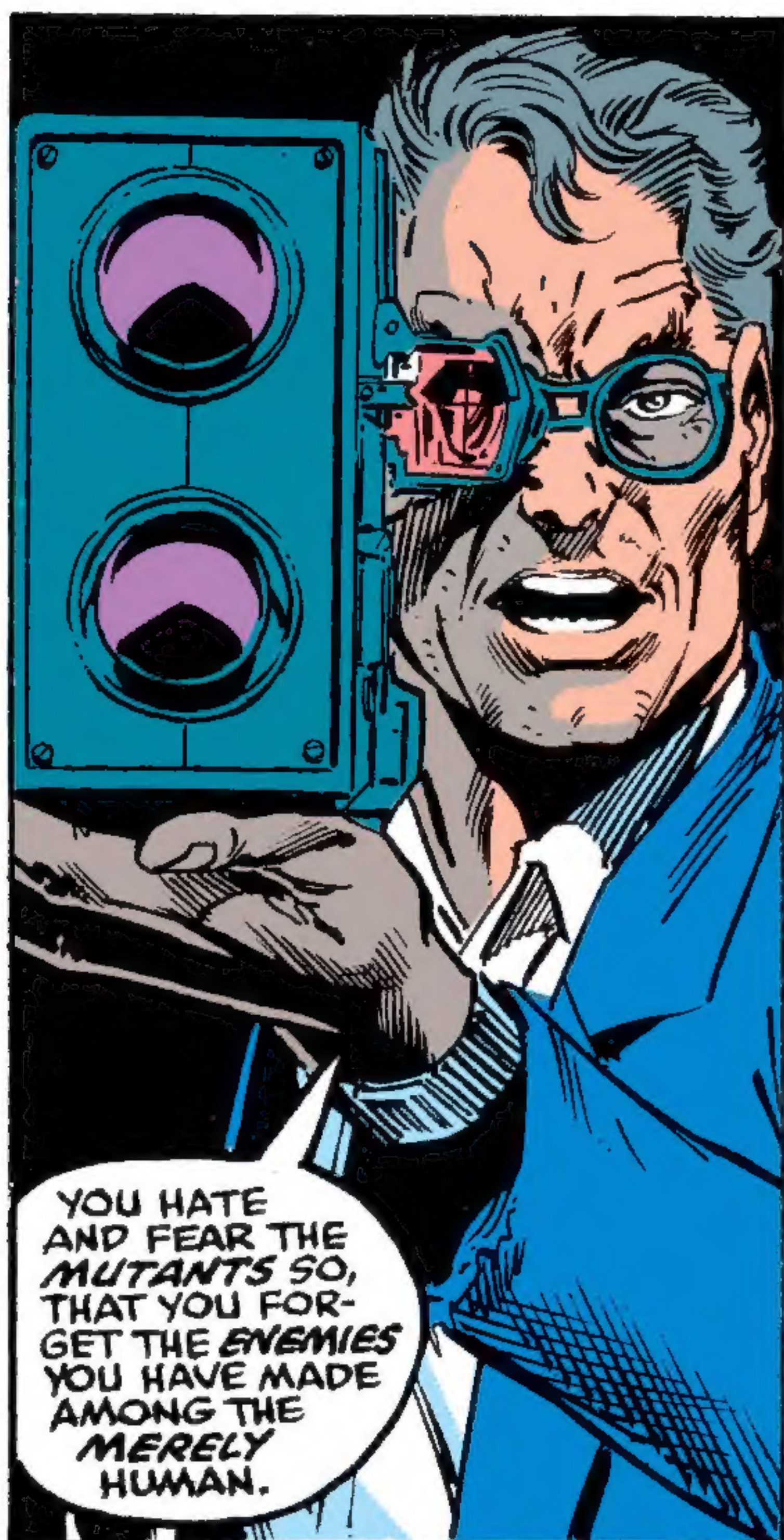
YOU, STORM! IT IS YOU WHO ARE TO BLAME. YOU WHO HAVE RESTORED THEIR POWERS!

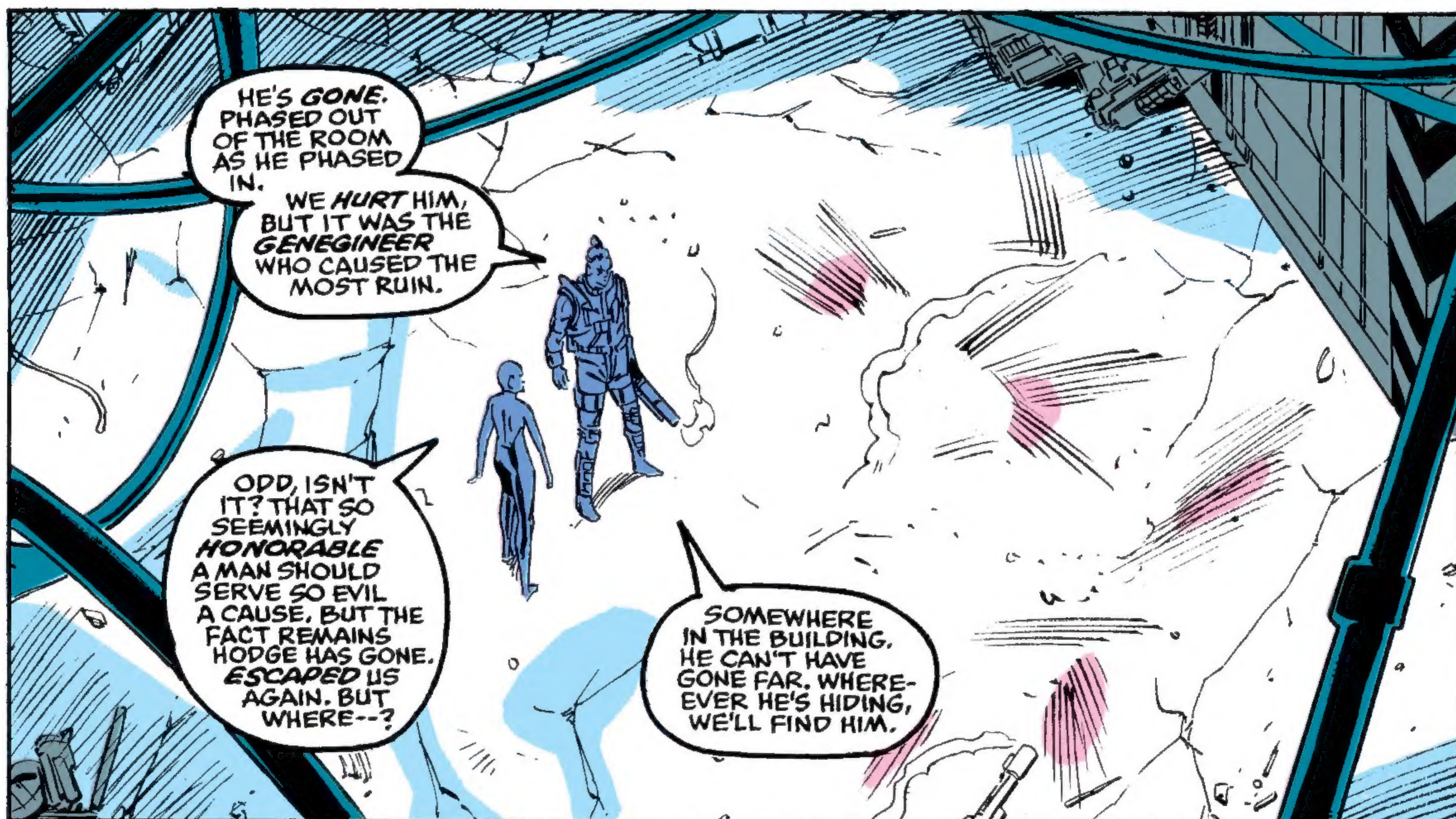
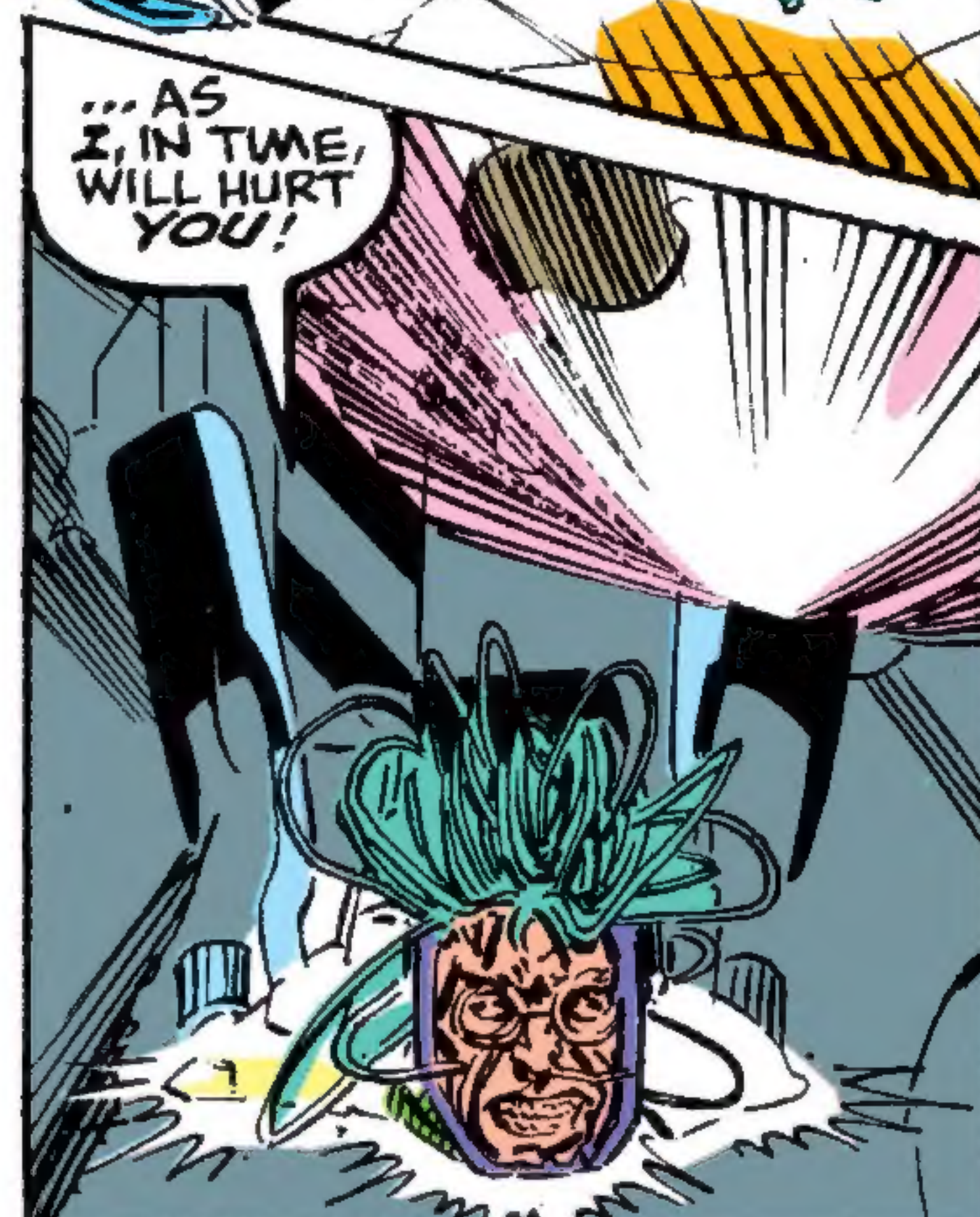
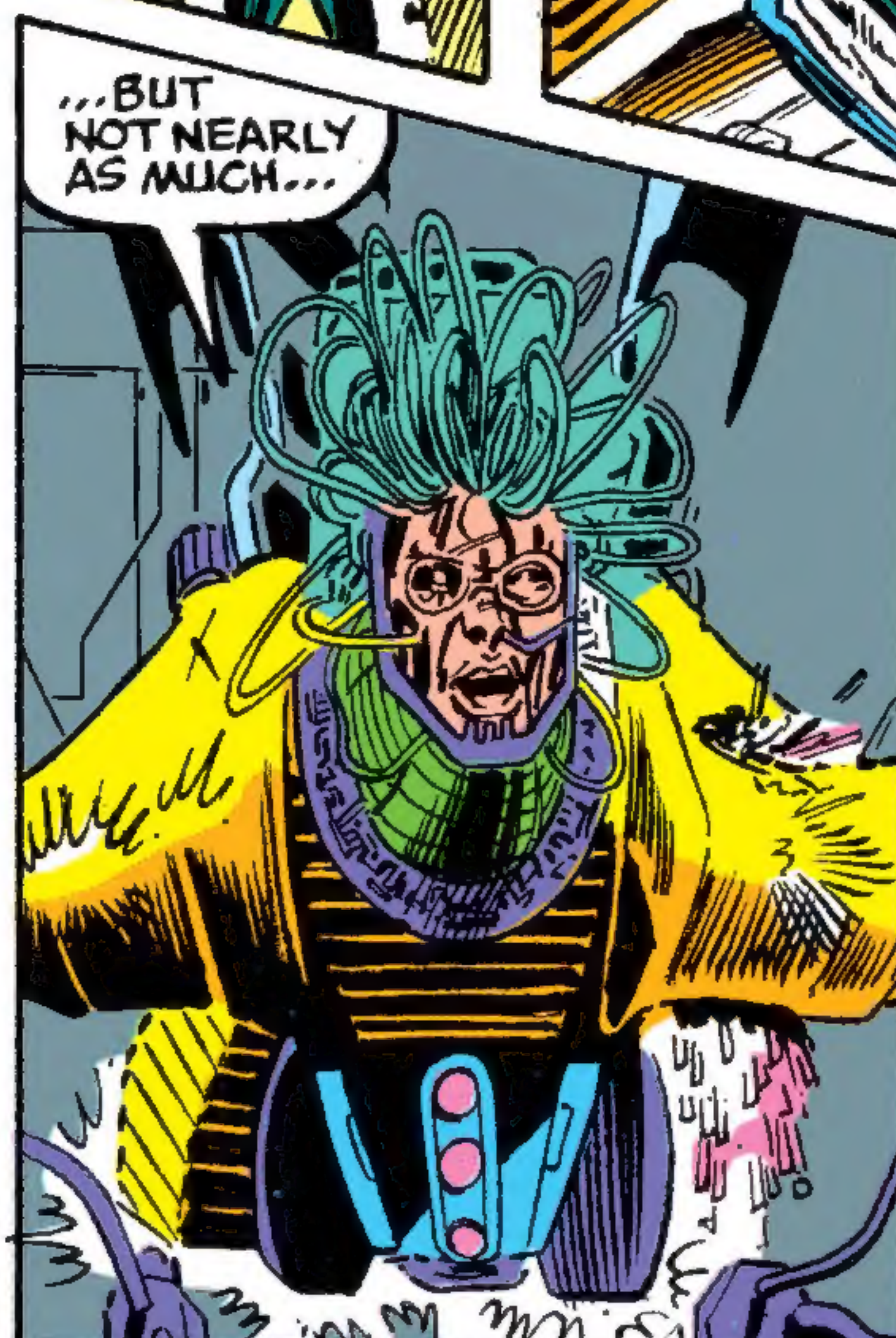
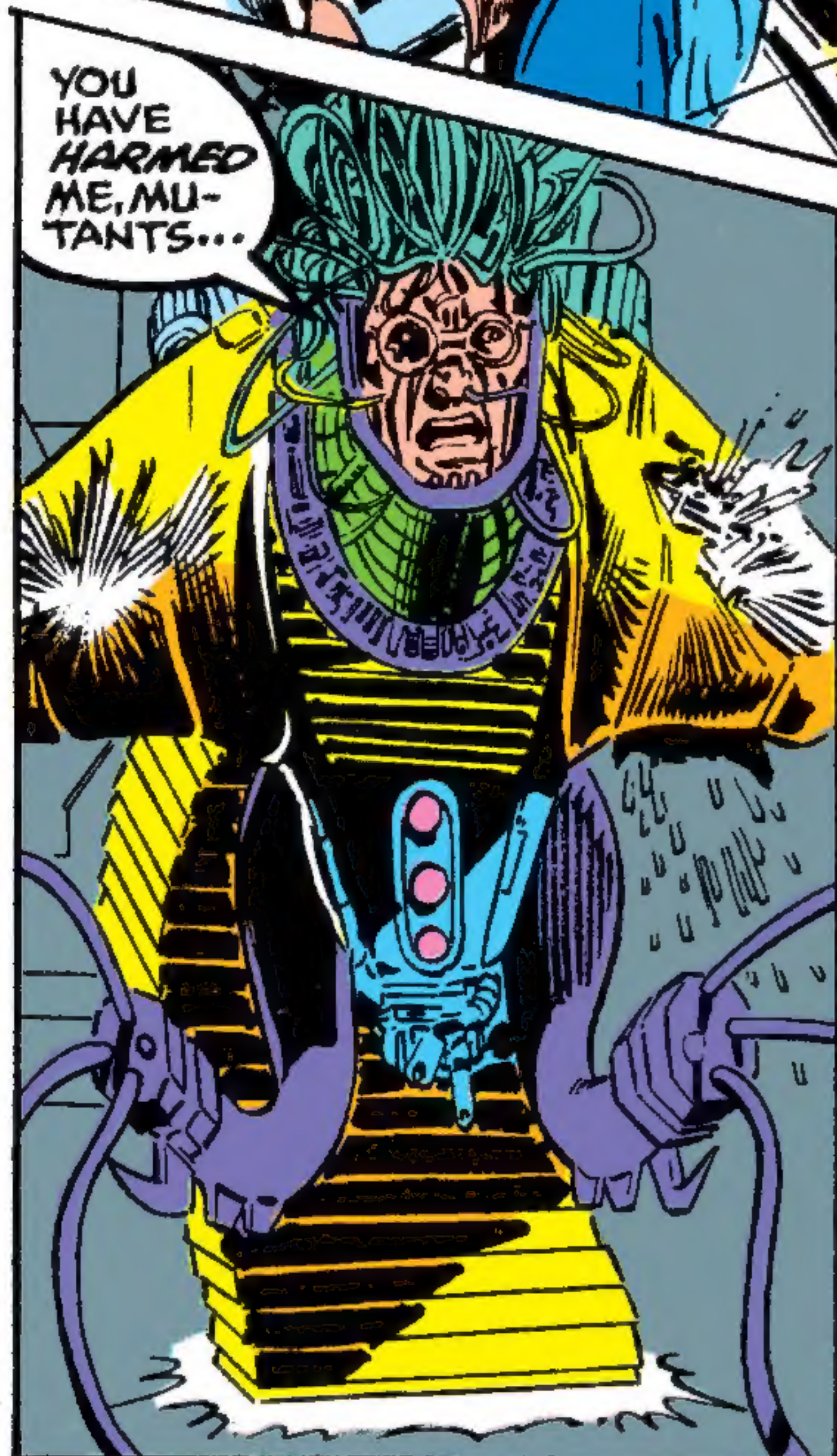
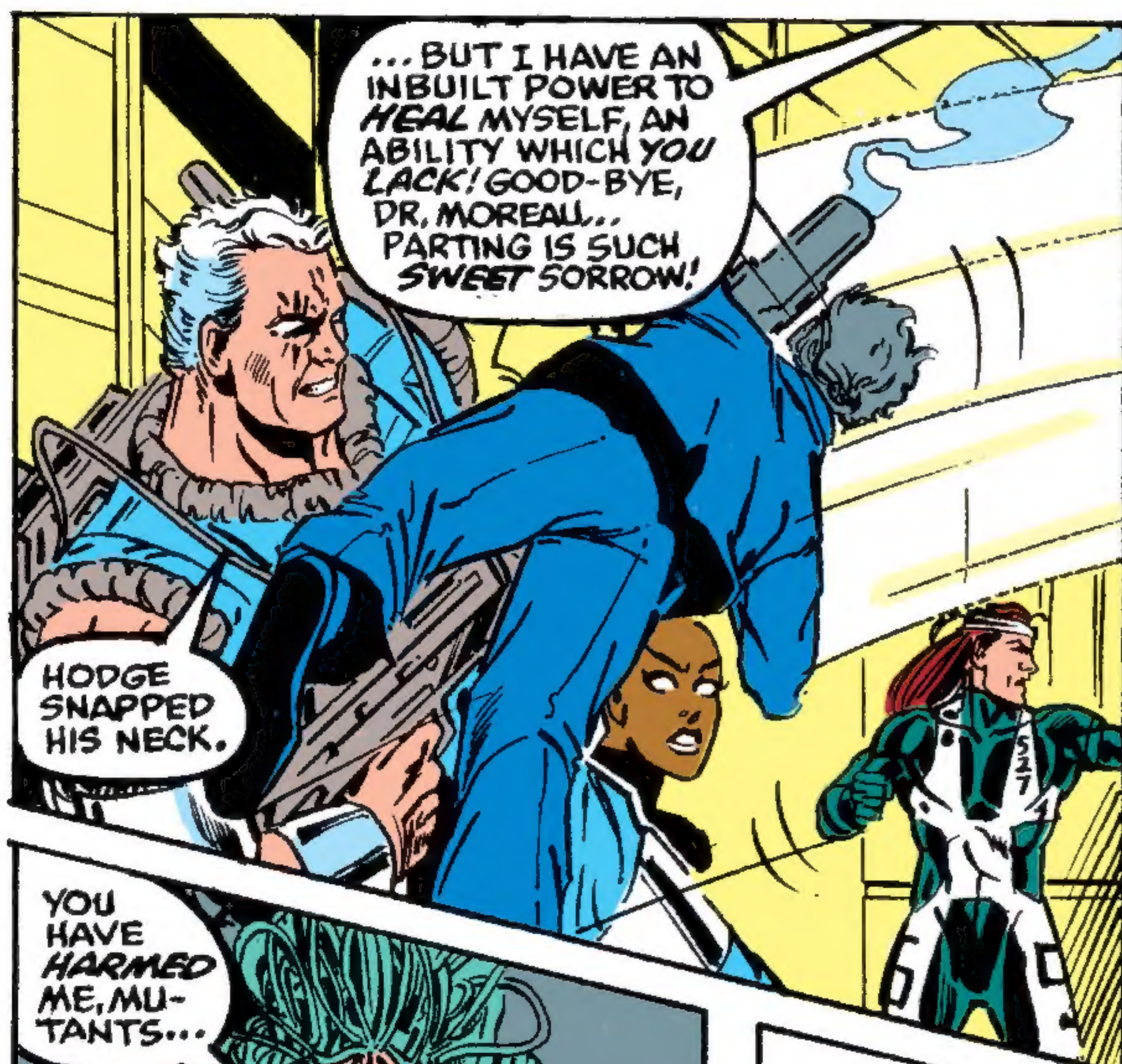
YOU ARE THE AUTHOR OF MY TROUBLES! AND BEFORE I LEAVE THIS ROOM, I WILL SEE YOU DEAD!

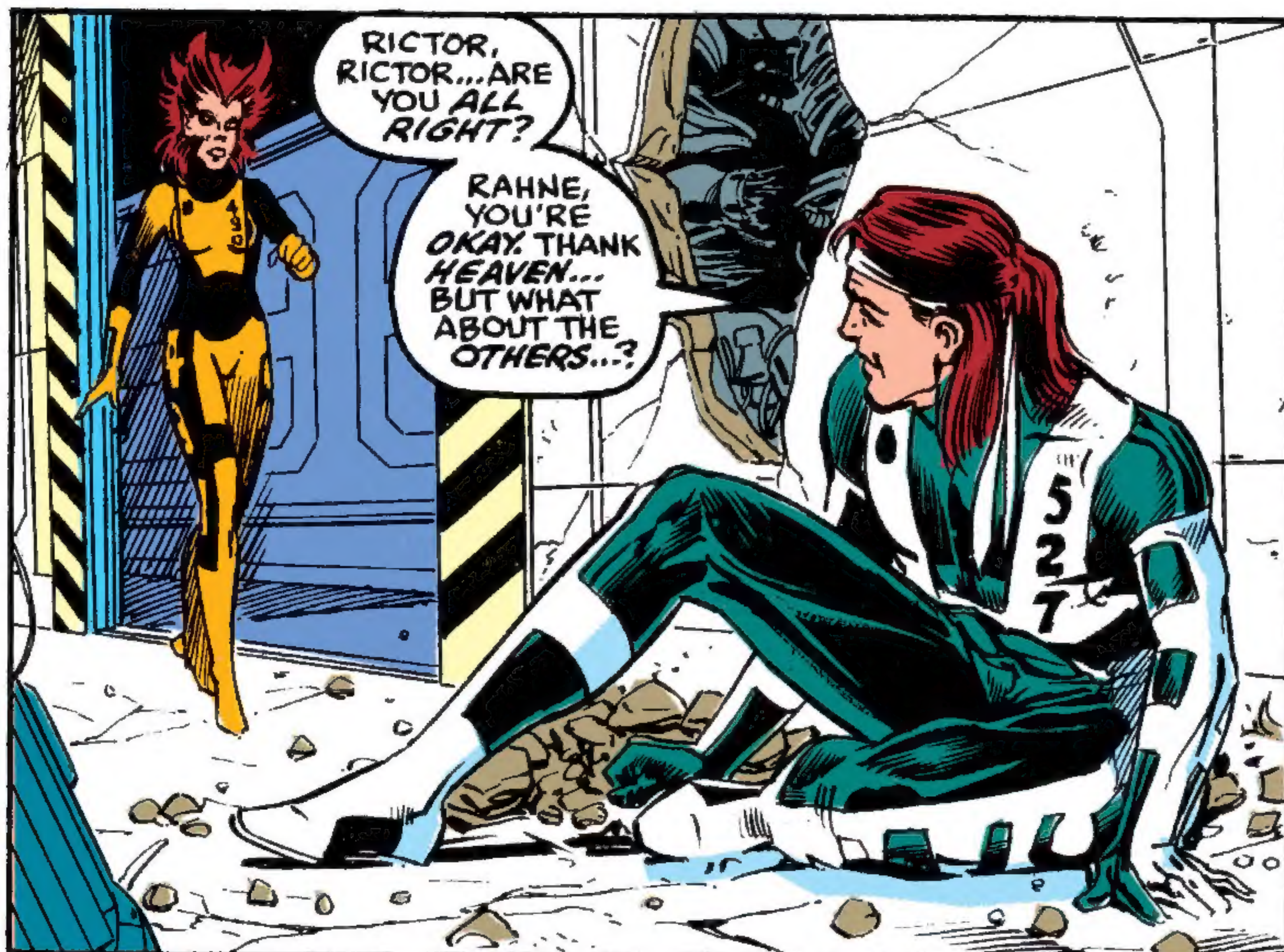


HODGE! YOU AIM AT HER, BUT IT IS ME YOU WOUND.

KRAKKOW!





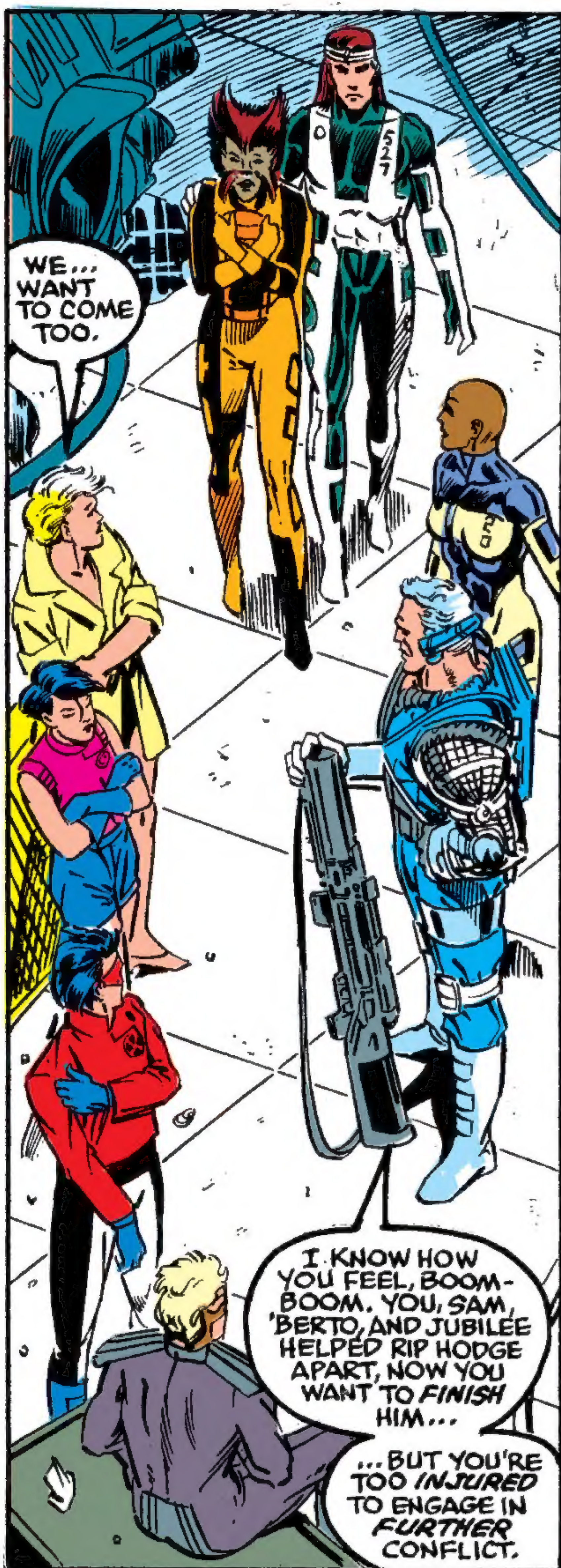


RICTOR,
RICTOR...ARE
YOU ALL
RIGHT?

RAHNE,
YOU'RE
OKAY. THANK
HEAVEN...
BUT WHAT
ABOUT THE
OTHERS...?



INJURED... BUT
THEY WILL LIVE,
RICTOR. SO WILL
HODGE. WE ARE
GOING TO HAVE
TO GO AFTER
HIM, CABLE.



WE...
WANT TO
COME
TOO.

HERE, BOOM-
BOOM. 'TIS
WARLOCK'S
ASHES. KEEP
THEM SAFE...
AN' IF I DO NA'
COME BACK...

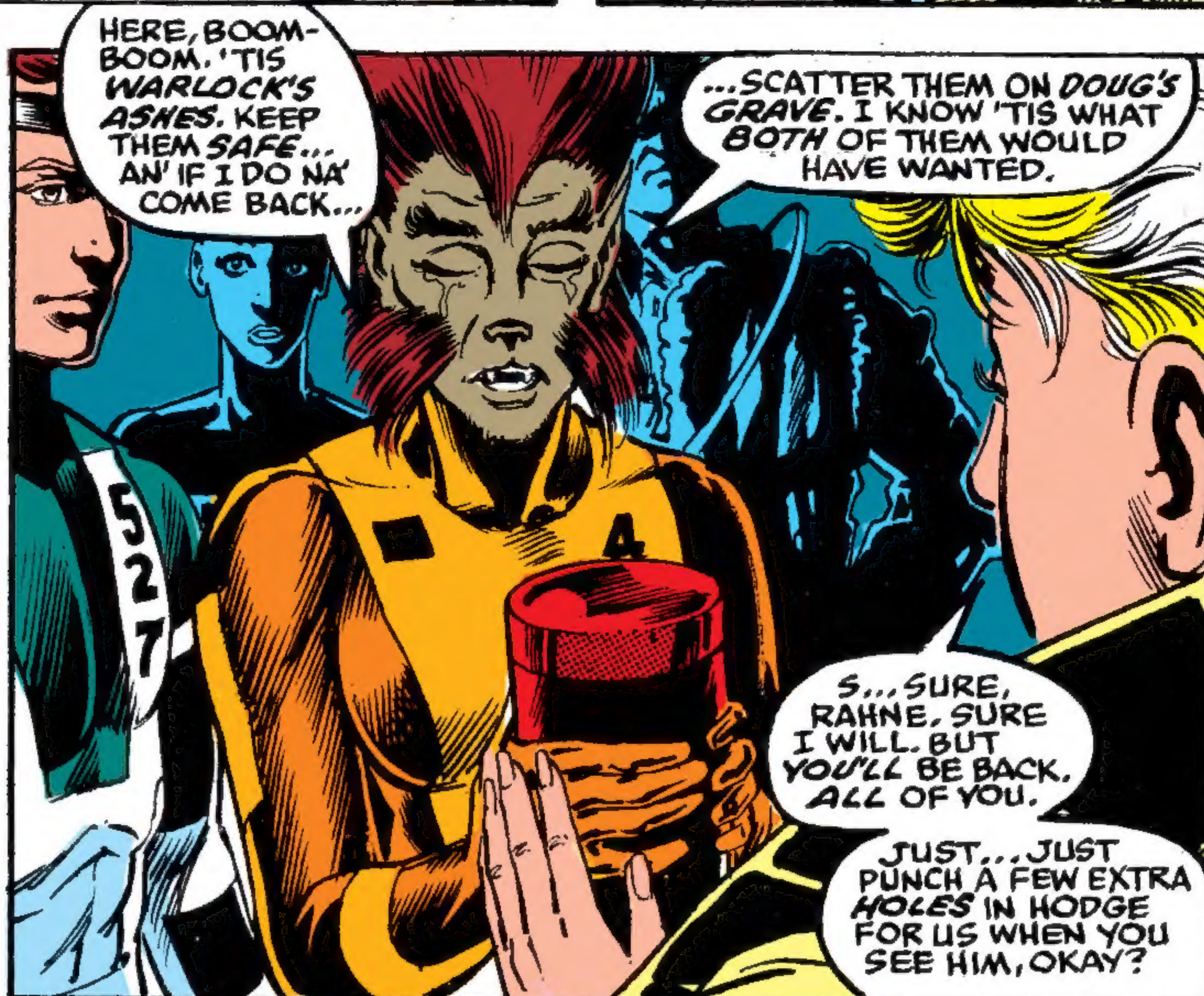
...SCATTER THEM ON DOUG'S
GRAVE. I KNOW 'TIS WHAT
BOTH OF THEM WOULD
HAVE WANTED.

S... SURE,
RAHNE. SURE
I WILL. BUT
YOU'LL BE BACK.
ALL OF YOU.

JUST... JUST
PUNCH A FEW EXTRA
HOLES IN HODGE
FOR US WHEN YOU
SEE HIM, OKAY?

I KNOW HOW
YOU FEEL, BOOM-
BOOM. YOU, SAM,
'BERTO, AND JUBILEE
HELPED RIP HODGE
APART, NOW YOU
WANT TO FINISH
HIM...

... BUT YOU'RE
TOO INJURED
TO ENGAGE IN
FURTHER
CONFLICT.



WE WILL,
BOOM-BOOM.

WORKING
TOGETHER,
WE'VE RIPPED
A BIG HOLE IN
HODGE AND
HIS PLANS FOR
GENOSHA.

NOW WE'RE
GOING TO HUNT
HIM DOWN AND
FINISH WHAT
WE STARTED.

SEE X-FACTOR #62 FOR THE DRAMATIC CONCLUSION OF
THE **X-TINCTION AGENDA**